

EXPLORING QUALITY AND DIVERSITY: THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER IN A CLASS OF DIVERSE LEARNERS

by

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In a completely rational society, the best of us would aspire to be teachers and the rest of us would have to settle for something less, because passing civilization along from one generation to the next ought to be the highest honour and the highest responsibility anyone could have.

Lee Iacocca

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to all the teachers who have struggled with their role in a diverse classroom.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My incredible research and learning journey over the last three years would not have been possible without the love and support of a few amazing people. I would like to thank my family and friends for always reading the sections I send them and providing constructive feedback and continuous encouragement. Thank you for believing in me and supporting me through this journey.

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ABSTRACT

The advent of democracy has witnessed radical changes in the demographic constitution of the learner population in schools. Many teachers now encounter classes that comprise learners from diverse racial, ethnic, religious and language backgrounds. How do these teachers ensure quality education in such a class of diverse learners? Accordingly, this research study set out to explore quality and diversity in a class of diverse learners with particular emphasis on the role of the teacher. The meta-theoretical paradigm that directed it was a combination of constructivism and interpretivism. The methodological paradigm employed a qualitative mode of inquiry and various sampling techniques to select the participants. Convenience sampling was used to select three schools, two classes per school and five learners per teacher, while purposive sampling were used to select two teachers per school. A mix of instruments was used to collect the data, such as semi-structured interviews, observations, field notes and a researcher journal. Findings from this study were fivefold. First, the training that teachers received with regard to diversity is insufficient and does not prepare them to teach a class of diverse learners. Second, the role of the teacher is complex and requires them to fulfil more than one role at a time; even though some roles are neglected, the majority of teachers focus on the role of facilitator. More emphasis should be placed on the importance of the roles and how they can contribute to quality in education. Third, teachers must follow an asset-based approach in a class of diverse learners. By using difference as a resource and an asset, teachers will be able to encourage open class discussions, involve learners in the lesson, keep their attention and use this to promote their understanding about complex topics and terms. Fourth, teachers have to make certain adjustments to their teaching style to accommodate diverse learners. It is important for all teachers to examine their own attitudes towards teaching diverse learners in order to provide the best education possible. Finally, certain quality assurance methods are in place at schools, but just how appropriate they are is debatable. New approaches must be developed and utilized to meet the needs of the current social context in South Africa to ensure that quality teaching takes place at schools.

Keywords: learners; teachers; role of a teacher; diversity; inclusive education; cooperative learning; quality assurance; quality in education.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

WORDS	MEANING
AS	Assessment Standard
AWB	“Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging”
BEd	Bachelors of Education
BEE	Black Economic Empowerment
BSc	Bachelors of Science
C2005	Curriculum 2005
DoE	Department of Education
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
GET	General Education and Training
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
HoD	Head of Department
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
LO	Learning Outcome
NCLB	No Child Left Behind Act
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NSE	Norms and Standards for Educators
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
SAT	School Assessment Team
SDT	School Development Team
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Teams
TEP	Teacher Education Programme
TQM	Total Quality Management
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USA	United States of America

CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to investigate two interlinking facets evident in education, namely, the role that teachers play in multicultural classrooms and how they ensure quality education in multicultural classrooms. The role of the teacher formed the basis of this study, with a focus on examples of good practice. In addition, it offers a view of social, political and economic changes that are transforming the meaning and orientation of the roles of teachers.

The purpose of this chapter is to lay the foundation for the study by presenting the South African context of education (section 1.2). The research problem (1.3), research questions (1.4) and aims (1.5) are discussed, and since the research is of a personal nature, the position of the researcher (1.6) will reveal how the research project was in part motivated by my own insecurities in teaching in a multicultural school. The chosen research approach and ethical strategies (1.7) will be discussed here and elaborated on in Chapter Three. The terminology and key concepts used in the study will be clarified (1.8) and research assumptions are revealed (1.9). The chapter outline is presented (1.10), followed by a summary (1.11).

1.2 BACKGROUND

Over the years, South Africa has experienced numerous instances in which resistance has influenced and shaped history and subsequently the education system. Since 1652, the social and political landscape of South Africa has been shaped firstly by colonial rule and then by apartheid policies. Translated as ‘separateness’, apartheid was introduced following the National Party’s electoral victory in 1948, and was “manifest in a body of legislation defining racial groups as well as many of the crucial aspects of people’s lives” (Gibson, 2004, p.24).

As a system based on racial hierarchy, it constructed racial categories for all citizens, namely: blacks (Africans), whites, coloureds and Indians (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, (TRC), 1998). One's rights and responsibilities under the system were defined by one's race, as established by law, the main aim being to separate blacks and whites. To achieve this goal, the government established separate residential areas for each of the identified groups (Gibson, 2004). Although apartheid is often defined as a system of laws, it was actually a conglomeration of legal and illegal means of separating citizens and subjecting the black majority to subjugation and oppression while providing vast subsidies to the minority white community (Powers & Ellison, 1995). Blacks and whites experienced apartheid differently, with the former not being permitted to associate with people of different races or colours, and having limited access to education, while the latter profited from relatively trouble-free access to education (Gibson, 2004).

During the apartheid epoch, so-called 'Model C schools' enrolled only white learners and consequently only hired white teachers. Following the 1994 elections and the implementation of universal suffrage a new Constitution, a process of transformation in education, was begun, with the several former education departments being merged into one national education system. According to the Department of Education (DoE, 1998) the post-apartheid government was committed to giving power to the people by providing quality education. The key policy changes that occurred during this time were the integration of all teacher education colleges into higher education institutions, the changes made to qualifications, accreditations and the Norms and Standards for Educators (NSE) (National Education Policy Act, 1996) and the introduction of the national curriculum (Sayed, 2004).

Throughout the country's history, segregation has been a constant feature of South African society and therefore of its education (Van Zyl, 2002), however, reform has been underway for a number of years (Wolhuter, 2001). Since 1994, various policies have been developed and legislation enacted to encourage the process of desegregation in schools (Vandeyar, 2003). The South African Schools Act and Bill of Rights formalised desegregation and created the opportunity for learners from diverse cultural backgrounds to attend schools of their choice. The motivation behind the desegregation drive included the ideal of equality

education opportunities (Kerr, 1969); the rise and creed of Human Rights (Wolhuter, 1993); the rise of multiculturalism and pluralism as an educational policy (Mouton, 1988); and the use of education as an instrument to mould national unity in diverse societies. All the factors are significant, but arguably the most important and urgent is equality. This legislation has made previously prohibited schools accessible to black learners, and not only did the schools' demographics undergo a rapid transformation but so did the attitudes of learners and teachers, institutional arrangements, policies and ethos of the schools (Sayed, 2001). However, instead of embracing the change and becoming schools of societal integration, many have continued as in the past, re-enforcing the supremacy of the pre-apartheid white schools (Jansen, 2004).

The desegregation process in schools has intensified the need for all teachers to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to equip them to work effectively with learners from diverse backgrounds through appropriate pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes. A study conducted by Meier (2005) to investigate pre-service teachers' perceptions of learner diversity found that they do indeed influence classroom teaching, and it was evident that some were negative. However, to be effective, teacher education programmes dealing with multicultural issues should not only focus on increasing teachers' content-related knowledge, but also attend to the disposition of prospective teachers regarding their multicultural skills, knowledge and experience (Pohan, 1996; Vandeyar, 2008a).

Currently, former Model C schools still employ a majority of white teachers though their learner populations have changed to more closely reflect the make-up of the country. Vandeyar and Killen (2006) argue that the racial mix of teachers has remained unaltered at most former Model C schools, whilst similarly for Cameron (1996), even though schools have transformed their teachers have not. This has led to a mismatch between the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of teachers and learners, resulting in many learners experiencing difficulty in relating to and associating with teachers (Vandeyar & Killen, 2006). Even though teachers are multi-talented and tend to adjust to new challenges with ease, those trained at monocultural institutions could see the new learner population as a challenge, particularly as there is a need to adapt and change their pedagogy, in order to accommodate diverse learners.

Schön (1995) agrees that this could be an enormous challenge for teachers and hence there is a need for clearly defined teachers' roles.

According to the Ministry of Education (2000), the NSE document (National Education Policy Act, 1996) provides directions and guidelines for pre-service and in-service teacher development, and is a vital step in addressing the poor quality of teaching in South Africa. The guidelines (or roles) are necessary to ensure that teachers of different races, cultures and ethnic groups are comfortable and prepared for the daunting task of teaching. The NSE (National Education Policy Act, 1996) defines seven roles for teachers, and describes in detail the knowledge, skills and values necessary to perform them successfully. The seven roles are: learning mediator; interpreter and designer of learning programmes; leader, administrator and manager; scholar, researcher and lifelong learner; assessor; community member, citizen and pastor; and learning area specialist. The roles of teachers, according to the NSE (National Education Policy Act, 1996), will be discussed and elaborated on in Chapter Two.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

With this history in mind, I was motivated to explore whether teachers who had trained at monocultural institutions could successfully teach a class of diverse learners, and if the seven prescribed roles, according to the NSE, are sufficient to equip teachers. Teachers who qualified during the apartheid period tend to teach in the manner in which they themselves were taught and trained (Rizivi & Elliot, 2005). Meier (2005) argues that teacher training programmes in South Africa have offered little content on intercultural understanding, although the sometimes limited scope may be effective in facilitating changed attitudes among teachers towards their diverse learners. Esteve (2000) confirms that teachers who did not know how to change their teaching roles or how to reorient their teaching methods could not cope with the situation. Some teachers oppose change because they are unwilling to abandon the subjects they have been teaching for years, or to prepare new ones that did not exist when they received their professional training (Esteve, 2000).

Hence, the following question arises: How do teachers ensure quality education in a class of diverse learners? The training that pre-service teachers receive has a tendency to form the platform for their teaching career and could ultimately shape their pedagogy. Since veteran and newly qualified teachers studied and started their teaching careers in different eras, one needs to ask whether this has had an effect on their learners as the quality of education might be affected by teachers who did not receive diversity training. Esteve (2000) argues that it is difficult to deal with mixed classes that comprise learners with mixed abilities, backgrounds and cultures. It is therefore essential that teachers are familiar and confident with their multitude of roles.

According to De Kock and Slabbert (2008, p.106), the aim of education is “to maximise and fully utilize human potential through facilitating lifelong learning towards a safe, sustainable and prosperous universe for all”. Since facilitation of learning is one of the key roles of being a teacher (see NSE), this central responsibility must not be neglected. As noted from the NSE (National Education Policy Act, 1996), the roles of the teacher are complex, and in addition to fulfilling them they also need to cope with demanding pressures from the DoE, School Governing Bodies (SGBs), School Management Teams (SMTs), parents, learners, the community and issues in their everyday lives. Pressure that cuts across many of these roles, and major causes of stress amongst teachers, are the lack of learner discipline (Weber, 2006), job losses, the economic recession, globalisation and professionalisation (Helsby, 1999).

However, as introduced above, it is the desegregation of learners as evident in South African schools (Morrison, 1994; Vandeyar, 2003; Wolhuter, 2001) that is the focus of my research. A by-product of the research is that teacher education programmes could be more sensitive to multicultural education and diversity, and as Korthagen and Kessels (1999) contend, teacher education programmes should be adjusted to make certain that future teachers are equipped for their roles in the classroom. Teacher education programmes in particular are responsible for preparing future teachers to promote meaningful, engaged learning for all learners, regardless of their race, gender, ethnic heritage, or cultural background (Shaw, 1993).

1.4 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

Based on the discussion above, several aims for the study can be identified. The aims are to:

- identify how monocultural teacher training has influenced current teaching practices;
- inquire how teachers have adjusted their roles to meet the needs of their diverse learners;
- observe how the adjustments influenced, and possibly changed, the roles of teachers;
- report on how teachers ensure quality education in a class of diverse learners.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question for this study is: *How do teachers ensure quality education in a class of diverse learners?*

From the historical context, the following specific secondary research questions were formulated:

- How has monocultural teacher training influenced teachers' pedagogy?
- What adjustments to their teaching style do teachers make in order to accommodate a class of diverse learners?
- What are the challenges involved in teaching a class of diverse learners?
- How does a class of diverse learners influence the role of the teacher?
- What quality assurance practices have been put in place by the teacher and the school?
- How is the quality of education ensured and maintained at schools?

Each secondary question was carefully considered and included, since it was pertinent to my research. The questions not only provided a platform but also assisted me in preparing my research instruments and gathering the most appropriate data for the study. The questions, linked to the rationale and the aim of the research study, provided focus and assisted me in looking at the research landscape as a whole.

1.6 POSITION OF THE RESEARCHER

As a researcher and a teacher, various paradigms shape my understanding and experiences while adding value to my life. I observe what is going on in my classrooms (social and cultural life) and analyse the meanings that learners attach to their own and others' actions. The learners in my classes can be understood by studying what is important to them. Interpretivism and constructivism thus play a vital role and, since I planned to interpret how teachers and learners construct their own personal knowledge, were suitable to use for this study.

I believe that modern day learners are far more independent and disciplined than in the past but they can also be egotistical and self-assured, whilst Harris, Fisher, Harris and Jarvis (2008) regard present-day learners as more conceited than their predecessors. Whatever the case, the attitude and behaviour of learners have changed and therefore there is a need for teachers also to change and adapt when taking on the various roles in their classrooms.

While teaching in and around London I was faced with a diversity of learners in schools and on returning to South Africa I realised that the learner population had changed from when I was a learner at school. It fascinated me that teachers (like myself) were trained with the perception that one will only teach learners who belong to the same race as oneself. While studying, the majority of examples and scenarios that were sketched contained white people and concepts associated with white culture. When I started teaching, my first class comprised 90% black learners, who because of the monocultural nature of my teacher training I did not know how to approach or teach. More importantly, I did not know how to ensure that my prejudices did not negatively influence the quality of their education. The research problem was initiated by my own insecurities as a multicultural teacher, particularly as the training I received at university had not fully prepared me for the real-world experience.

Patton (1980) writes that a good researcher reviews documents looking for facts, but also needs to 'read between the lines' and pursue collaborative evidence elsewhere when that seems appropriate. As a researcher, I needed to be flexible in real-life situations and not feel threatened by unexpected changes or missed opportunities. I also needed to understand the

purpose of the study and be aware that I was going into the world of real human beings who may be unsure of what the research would bring.

1.7 RESEARCH STRATEGY

The research strategy was devised within the meta-theoretical and methodological paradigm, including appropriate ethical considerations and quality assurance criteria, a more detailed discussion of which will follow in Chapter Three.

1.7.1 Meta-theoretical and methodological paradigm

The meta-theoretical paradigm is a combination of constructivism and interpretivism, while the methodological inquiry is qualitative. This approach required the use of multiple, descriptive case studies, which allowed the researcher to observe the teachers and learners while gaining valuable insight into their daily routine. Case studies were the most appropriate to use since the participants could provide me with rich and thick descriptions, that would add to credibility of the study. The following table briefly outlines my theory, to be further discussed in Chapter Three.

Table 1. Meta-theoretical paradigm

Ontology	Multiple subjective realities which are constructed and interpreted. Constructed through human interactions.
Epistemology	Events understood through interpretation, influenced by interactions with social context.
Methodology	Qualitative. Case studies. Understanding and interpretation of particular contexts.

Source: Adapted from Archer (2009)

1.7.2 Sample, instruments data collection and data analysis

Convenience sampling was used to select the three secondary schools in Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa. The schools are situated in different districts (Tshwane North and South) and

have undergone transformation and integration regarding learners of colour. Two teachers per school were selected by purposive sampling, which entails selection according to pre-selected criteria relevant to the research question (Maree, 2007). Convenient sampling was used to decide which classes to select from each teacher. Focus group interviews were conducted with five learners (per class), who were randomly selected. The research instruments that I used to collect the data included semi-structured interviews with principals and teachers, lesson observations and focus group interviews with learners. The instruments allowed me to collect rich, thick data. Once the interviews were transcribed, the data (interviews, focus groups, reflections and observations) was coded¹ by hand and arranged into themes. Grounded theory was used to develop the codes used in the analysis. Comprehensive detail of the research strategy will be given in Chapter Three.

1.7.3 Ethical consideration

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethics Committee at the University after a form explaining the purpose and the nature of the research was completed and submitted to Committee. The Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) granted me access to the schools by approving my research request. The principal and the SGB at each of the schools granted permission to collect data at their schools. Letters of informed consent were issued to the parents to inform them about the research, while the learners received similar letters inviting them to take part. Consent was given by both parents and learners.

The risk associated with the research is small since the teacher had some authority and power over the learners who took part in the research. The participants were also allowed to withdraw at any time if they so wished. Since personal benefit and external pressures existed, measures were put in place to prevent this from happening. The risk: benefit ratio was favourable since the learners, teachers and school could benefit from the findings and recommendations. The participants contributed by adding to the body of knowledge, itself a worthwhile exercise.

¹ Although 'data' is a Latin plural of datum, it may also be treated as an uncountable entity, thus acting grammatically as a singular noun, as in this paper.

1.7.4 Quality criteria

The following quality criteria were used to ensure the quality of my research would not be affected: credibility, transferability and dependability. Credibility refers to the findings and how they match what happens in reality. Transferability has to do with the results being applied to other situations and dependability is enhanced when, if the study is repeated, the same results will emerge. The criteria will be elaborated on in Chapter Three.

1.8 RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS

Researchers hold certain assumptions about the phenomena under study (Merriam, 1998), and from the literature I formulated several:

Research assumption 1

Assimilation remains the dominant approach in South African schools (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997; Lemmer, Meier & Van Wyk, 2006; Stolzenberg, 1993; Vandeyar, 2003). (See 2.2)

Research assumption 2

Pre-service teachers are not adequately trained to teach a class of diverse learners (Beykont, 2002; Keengwe, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2001; Smith, 2004). (See 2.3.1 and 2.4.1).

Research assumption 3

Teachers' perceptions, attitudes and beliefs are formed by their personal experiences and professional education (Jansen, 2001; Jita, 2004; Meier, 2005; Vandeyar 2008a). (See 2.3.2 and 2.4.2).

Research assumption 4

Cooperative learning is an effective approach to use in diverse classrooms (Booyens & Grosser, 2008; Gunter, Estes & Schwab, 2003; Johnson, Johnson & Smith, 1998; Joubert, Bester & Meyer, 2008). (See 2.4.3).

1.9 TERMINOLOGY CLARIFICATION

The following terms are used throughout the research and are here clarified as they are understood within the context of the study while referring specifically to diversity and quality education.

1.9.1 Learners

Schools around the world have different terms for the children who enrol and attend their classes. In America and Europe they are known as ‘students’ or ‘pupils’ (Brown, 2007; Burt, Ortlieb & Cheek, 2009; Cartledge & Kourea, 2008; Demirbolat, 2006; Gamoran, 2003; Gordon, Reid & Petocz, 2010; Monzo & Rueda, 2001; Oortwijn, Boekaerts, Vedder & Strijbos, 2008; Shevlin, Kenny & McNeela, 2004; Stewart, 2002). This can be quite misleading and might cause confusion, since the term ‘students’ in South Africa is more often used when referring to children attending universities and colleges. In South Africa, when referring to a primary or secondary school child, he/she is referred to as ‘learner’. Since the study focuses on South African education the term learner will be used throughout, unless an alternative term is being quoted from the literature.

1.9.2 Teachers

Educational institutions in each country have a specific term used to describe the people responsible for teaching or educating the children. As in the previous section, terms differ, and people responsible for teaching or educating the learners may be known as ‘teachers’ or ‘educators.’ Much debate has been engaged in on the difference between a teacher and an educator. According to Leibling and Prior (2005), a teacher is a facilitator of learning who motivates, inspires, understands, engages, supports, forms relationships, trains, coaches, encourages, perseveres and, above all, is constantly learning (p.154), while the Oxford English Dictionary (OED, 2010) defines an ‘educator’ as “a person who provides instruction or education”. For the purpose of this study, the term ‘teacher’ will be used, but is regarded as synonymous with ‘educator.’ In the study the term ‘pre-service teacher’ will be used when referring to teachers that are currently studying and have not completed their teaching training, while ‘in-service teachers’ or ‘teachers’ refers to teachers currently teaching in schools.

1.9.3 Role of a teacher

The role of the teacher encompasses all the tasks, functions, duties or responsibilities that they must fulfil. Within the NSE (National Education Policy Act, 1996), the government's vision of the South African teacher was aligned with other policies, such as Outcomes Based Education (OBE) and Curriculum 2005 (C2005), and a description given of the 'competencies' of a good teacher. The NSE (National Education Policy Act, 1996) thus identified the roles a teacher must 'perform' and the duties for which he/she is responsible (see above), as well as discussing the knowledge, skills and values required to perform them all successfully (Weber, 2006).

1.9.4 Diversity

According to Lumby and Coleman (2007), diversity education is like a chameleon as it takes on different appearances (or meanings) over time. The University of Pennsylvania (2009) defines diversity as the presence in one population of a variety of cultures, ethnic groups, languages, physical features, socio-economic backgrounds, opinions, religious beliefs, sexuality, gender identity and neurology. However, even this list is not complete, since it omits aspects of difference which contribute to the diversity of learners in terms of educational background and age. For DiTomaso and Hooijberg (1996), diversity is the range of characteristics which not only result in perceptions of difference between people, but may lead to a response in others that advantages or disadvantages the individual. Diversity in the context of this study of South African reflects the wide range of differences between the learners who populate the country's classrooms. Teachers are constitutionally and professionally obliged to respect the differences between their learners and to use these as a resource when planning and presenting lessons. Different schools of thought can be used to address diversity, e.g., post-colonialism, critical race theory, cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism, but for the purpose of this study all forms of diversity will be included, with no emphasis placed on a specific school of thought.

1.9.5 Inclusive education

Many definitions of inclusive education have evolved throughout the world, ranging from extending the scope of ordinary schools so that they can include a greater diversity of children

(Clark, Dyson, & Milward, 1995), to a set of principles which ensure that the learner with a disability is viewed as a valued and needed member of the community in every respect (Uditsky, 1993). Some definitions focus on human interaction, with Forest and Pearpoint (1992) seeing inclusion as a way of dealing with difference, while Ballard (1995) and Clark et al. (1995) adopt an institutional perspective and focus on organisational arrangements and school improvement. In South Africa, inclusive education is defined as a learning environment that promotes the full personal, academic and professional development of all learners, irrespective of race, class, gender, disability, religion, culture, sexual preference, learning styles and language.

1.9.6 Cooperative learning

Cooperative learning is a successful teaching strategy in which small teams, each with learners of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. Each member of a team is responsible not only for learning what is taught but also for helping teammates learn, thus creating an atmosphere of achievement. Learners work through the assignment until all group members successfully understand and complete it (Kagan, 1994). Research has shown that cooperative learning techniques promote learning and academic achievement; enhance learner satisfaction with their learning experience; develop learners' social skills and help to promote positive race relations (Johnson & Johnson, 1999).

1.9.7 Quality assurance

Quality assurance refers to all actions taken to ensure that standards and procedures are adhered to and that delivered services meet performance requirements (Georgia Department of Human Resources, 2009). Quality assurance could also refer to systematic management and assessment procedures adopted by institutions to monitor performance and ensure achievement of quality outputs and improvements (Biggs, 2003). Various scholars in the field posit that schools must validate both the traditional and contemporary cultures of their learners and recognise the contributions that all races have made in shaping the larger multicultural society (Banks, 2001a; Gay 2000; Van Hamme, 1995). Van Hamme (1995) believes that a key role in ensuring quality education in a diverse class rests with the teacher.

Teachers must identify strategies that will be most effective in building on learners' academic and cultural strengths to enable them to successfully participate in a complex, multicultural community.

1.9.8 Quality in education

Many definitions of quality in education exist (Barrett, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Grant-Lewis & Motala, 2004; Liston, Borko & Whitcomb, 2008; Sayed & Ahmed, 2011; Tikly & Barrett, 2011), testifying to the complex nature of the concept. The terms 'efficiency', 'effectiveness', 'equity' and 'quality' have often been used synonymously (Adams, 1993). Considerable consensus exists around the basic dimensions of quality education today, however quality education includes:

- learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities;
- environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities;
- content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life, and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace;
- processes through which trained teachers use learner-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities;
- outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society (UNICEF, 2000).

This definition allows for an understanding of education as a complex system embedded in a political, cultural and economic context.

1.10 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

The following outline defines the structure of this research report:

Chapter One – Orientation of study

This chapter introduces the topic of research and contributes to an understanding of the point

of reference the researcher has taken. The key sections are an introduction (1.1), background to local and international perspectives (1.2), the problem statement (1.3), aims (1.4), research questions (1.5), position of the researcher (1.6), the research strategy (1.7), research assumptions (1.8), clarification of terminology (1.9) and the outline of the study (1.10).

Chapter Two – Literature review and conceptual framework

The chapter explores diversity in general by looking at some of the approaches and terms associated with it (2.2.). The chapter investigates the international perspective on diversity (2.3) as well as the local stance (2.4). The roles of the teacher as set out by the NSE (National Education Policy Act, 1996) are discussed and new roles that emerged from the literature are shared (2.4.4). Quality assurance methods and principles used internationally and locally are explored (2.5) and finally the conceptual framework (2.6), based on culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2000) is explained.

Chapter Three – Research design and methodology

The chapter explores the pragmatic assumptions of the study (3.2). The research design (3.3) is based on multiple descriptive case studies and the sampling method (3.4) used for selecting the schools, teachers, classes and learners are explained. Data was collected using multiple sources, namely semi-structured interviews, structured observations and focus groups discussions (3.5). Grounded theory was used to analyse the data (3.6). Quality criteria such as credibility, transferability and dependability are clarified (3.7). Ethical considerations of access, informed consent and ethical clearance are justified (3.8).

Chapter Four – Findings

The purpose of this chapter is to report the findings from the fieldwork. The chapter follows a narrative approach, with each of the three schools (Kings Cross, West Quay and Stratford) portrayed as a single case. When using multiple cases, each case is treated singly, however, each case's conclusions contribute to the study as a whole. A background of each of the sampled schools and participants is provided (4.2, 4.3, 4.4), flowing into a description of the findings which are exposed in a structured and narrative approach, in the form of different

themes (4.5). Hence, the themes that emerged relate to the multiple case studies and are reinforced by the comments from the various participants.

Chapter Five – Analysis and discussion

During this chapter the findings from Chapter Four will be analysed and discussed with reference to the literature and the conceptual framework. The chapter follows the same structured and narrative approach as Chapter Four and reference is made to the participating schools and teachers by using the pseudonyms allocated to each. Incorporating the findings, literature and conceptual framework allowed the researcher to identify the similarities (5.2) and differences between them (5.3). During the analysis and discussion the researcher will add his/her own voice and asks questions that could lead to future research. The silences identified in the literature (5.5) will be discussed after which a summary of the analysis (5.6) will follow.

Chapter Six – Recommendations and conclusion

This chapter allows the researcher to summarise the research project by looking at the findings and themes that emerged during this study. The main and secondary research questions are reviewed and possible answers are provided (6.2). The key findings will be summarised (6.3) while the significance of the findings and the contribution that the study made towards generation of new knowledge, policy, practice and personal growth will be discussed (6.4). The research assumptions from Chapter One will be revisited (6.5). Certain limitations exist, which the researcher identifies (6.6). Suggestions are offered for future research (6.7) and recommendations made for the study and a way forward (6.8).

1.11 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter has provided an introduction to the background, context, rationale and outline of this study. The main research question was identified and supported by the secondary research questions. The position of the researcher is also included since the research is of such a personal nature. The assumptions that the researcher had have been listed and a brief summary of each forthcoming chapter offered. The following chapters provide information

that build on and enhance the information provided. Chapter Two reviews international and local literature on multicultural education, diversity, the roles of teachers and finally quality assurance practices.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to identify what literature is available on the research topic and to identify the limitations of previous research and gaps in the literature. Relevant arguments from various researchers will be presented in a structured way. The first section (2.2) will focus on diversity and how it can be used in various contexts. Section 2.3 investigates the international view surrounding diversity, while section 2.4 is devoted to the local stance of diversity. In theory, teachers are required to fulfil seven roles outlined in the NSE (National Education Policy Act, 1996). In both the international and local sections I will identify and discuss roles as mentioned in the respective sources. Successful teachers who set high expectations for their learners and show good practice play a significant role in identifying the additional roles of multicultural teachers. Quality assurance is vital in every role that a teacher fulfils and will be discussed in section 2.5. The conceptual framework will form the basis of section 2.6, it being the lens through which I conduct my research.

2.2 DIVERSITY

The term 'diversity' has been defined in a number of different ways with each definition able to affect the ways teachers understand and employ the term, as well as the ways in which they approach differences in their classrooms (Silverman, 2010). For Wellner, (2000) diversity is the condition of being different or having differences. Traditionally, it refers to different race, gender, ethnicity, culture, language, disability and sexual orientation (Morrison, 2006), yet when applied to human relations it has been known to cover secondary areas such as age, thought, communication style, work style, lifestyle, educational background, marital status, work experience and income (Loden & Rosener, 1991). Norton and Fox (1997) commented

that some people become so focused on the definition that they impose it on others in ways that may not be appropriate, while Wellner (2000) suggests that one should rather investigate what differences define a school and then create a definition of diversity that reflects its traditions.

In other instances, the term is increasingly used within organisational and management discourses to refer to ways in which institutions seek to integrate and manage those individuals and groups not fully represented within them. Diversity is thus closely associated with strategies targeting sections of a population that are not part of the social mainstream. In this process, those who fall outside of the norm within an organisation are singled out as representing what is 'diverse', thus being 'different' or 'other', and as such needing to be 'managed'; hence the organisational discourse of 'managing diversity' (Agocs & Burr, 1996). As mentioned in Chapter One, no specific attention is given to the different variations of diversity, but rather the focus is primarily on diversity as a whole and how it impacts on the role of a teacher, and thus on education. Unfortunately, sources both local and international tend to focus on cultural diversity, and will thus be prominent in this chapter. As a result, diversity is rendered in terms of attributes or characteristics of differences and is shorthand for naming precisely those differences that need to be 'managed', since they create the conditions for conflicts to arise (Todd, 2011). The initial summary of different interpretations presented in the literature suggest that a common definition is not possible in pedagogical contexts (Gordon et al., 2010), however when returning it to education a variety of approaches are used.

When considering the school environment, embracing diversity does not merely imply desegregating schools to include various cultures, or adding optional extras to the school curriculum, but rather various approaches have been identified to deal with the diverse learner population. These include: assimilation, contributionism (Banks, 1989; Van Heerden, 1998), colour-blindness, multicultural education, anti-racist education, postcolonialism (Dimitriadis & McCarthy, 2001; Gallagher-Geurtsen, 2009), hybridity and cosmopolitanism (Appiah, 2006; Waghid, 2009). Each of these terms will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

A study by Vandeyar (2003) found that *assimilation* is still the dominant approach in South African schools. As part of the process, minority groups are expected to become incorporated (assimilated) into the mainstream of the dominant group culture as they are required to adopt the language, cultural models and values of the dominant group. Little recognition is given to the needs of the individual against a diverse background, and educational policies and practises remain ethnocentric (Lemmer et al., 2006). However, assimilation is a give-and-take process, and in the process the dominant culture is enriched by and acquires much from the minorities (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997). Formal education has been regarded as the most effective means for bringing about assimilation, however, as Stolzenberg (1993) has argued, assimilation can be avoided if cultural differences are respected.

The next is referred to by Banks (1989) as the ‘contributionist approach’ to teaching learners from cultures or groups other than the previous dominant group of the school's population. However, according to Van Heerden (1998) it may not always be effective:

...to have a 'cultural day' at school, for example, a Zulu or Indian day, or to string together medleys of verses of songs in different languages in an effort by schools to signal acceptance of 'new' learners is a superficial 'add on' gesture that does little to bring about real unity in diversity... (p.110)

The contributionist approach is also known as the ‘celebratory approach’, in which the learners celebrate their cultural beliefs and customs on a specific day. Again, Van Heerden regards this approach as generally unsuccessful.

The *colour-blind* approach to diversity in education is another way in which schools continue to maintain the status quo (Jansen & Christie, 1998, p.103). When educators are ‘colour-blind’ they claim not to see, and they ignore, race or colour in their dealings with learners. Societies worldwide are made up of diverse groups of people whose dynamics filter into their schooling system, and ‘multicultural education’ has become a popular term used by teachers to describe education for a diverse group of learners (Banks & McGee Banks, 2009, p.66). Koppelman and Goodhart (2005) describe multicultural education as the existence of many different groups of people within a society, while according to Banks and Banks (1995), it creates equal educational opportunities for learners from diverse racial, ethnic, socio-class and

cultural groups. Concurring with this, Grant and Sleeter (2007) argue that multicultural education thus calls for the reform of the entire classroom and the school itself.

Several distinct approaches to multicultural education constitute a range of curricular, pedagogical and social justice perspectives, each with significantly different political, social and economic goals. *Anti-racist* education is a parallel approach that focuses on the issues of social justice and inequality, but exponents of the theory argue that multicultural approaches to schooling have focused on the curriculum and the classroom at the expense of examining wider social political and economic influences on inequality and racism (Nelson, 1992). Nieto and Bode (2008) comments that anti-racist education is a defining component of multicultural approaches, while on the other hand McCarthy (1990) claims that anti-racist approaches are more radical and confrontational. It is clear that multicultural education and anti-racist education are firmly connected in their commitment to work for reform, equity and justice (Nelson, 1992; Wilson, 1991).

The next approach, based on *postcolonial* theory is typically applied to nations that were colonised by one or more nations (Gallagher-Geurtsen, 2009). The results of one nation dominating another and imposing, for example, its culture and language upon the people and ideas of another yields typical results such as linguistic and cultural loss, hybridisation, and struggles against neo-colonial conceptions of race, class, gender and multiple national affiliations (Dimitriadis & McCarthy, 2001; Young, 2003). Around the world, different cultures exist and influence each other, creating an inseparable hybrid culture (Gilroy, 1993). *Hybridity* also works in concert with culturally responsive pedagogy, but at the same time calls it into question. Inspiring hybridity in learners may be a way of complicating what is meant by being culturally responsive, but it may also broaden the concept of cultural responsiveness to the global scale, therefore recognizing the international power that flows between and is taken up by learners (Gallagher-Geurtsen, 2009). Maeda (2009) deems that teaching and learning based on the concept of cultural hybridity should be accepted in schools, as it may positively contribute to the foundations of a democratic society.

According to Beck (2000), one of the most destructive ideas has sprung from the myth that people are essentially separated and segregated into groups that are defined by such criteria as gender, culture, language, race, or religion, and it is easy to see that these boundaries are a major cause of conflict. Appiah (2006) challenges this kind of thinking by resurrecting the ancient philosophy of *cosmopolitanism*, which is a dynamic concept based on two fundamental ideas. First is the idea that people have responsibilities to others that are beyond those based on affiliation or nationality, and, second, just because other people have different customs and beliefs they will likely still have meaning and value. According to Waghid (2009), one is a cosmopolitan on the grounds of the compassion and care one exhibits as an individual towards all other human beings, irrespective of affiliation, nationality or beliefs. Ideally then, cosmopolitanism is an appropriate approach to employ when working with diverse groups.

It is vital for pre-service and in-service to have a clear understanding about the terms associated with diversity like assimilation, contributionism, colour-blindness, multicultural education, anti-racist education, postcolonialism, hybridity and cosmopolitanism to ensure they comprehend to importance of the issue and provide quality education for all their learners. To this end the next section will focus on the main topics from international literature with regards to diversity.

2.3 INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON DIVERSITY

Voluminous literature is available that focuses on either diversity or the role of the teacher (Artiles, Trent, Hoffman-Kipp & Lopez-Torrez, 2000; Belogolovsky & Somech, 2010; Brown, 2007; Cartledge & Kourea, 2008; Liston, Borko & Whitcomb, 2008; Monzo & Rueda, 2001; Richards, Brown, & Forde, 2007; Timperley & Alton-Lee, 2008; Tylee 1992; Twiselton, 2004; Yang, 1998; Yendol-Silva & Dana, 2004). The main topics under discussion include diversity education and training, the position of the teacher and teacher-learner interactions. These themes apply to my research topic, *Exploring quality and diversity: The role of the teacher in a class of diverse learners* and the research question, *How do teachers ensure quality education in a class of diverse learners?* The literature also brings closer an

understanding of the phenomenon under study and justifies the use of my conceptual framework.

2.3.1 Diversity education and training

The purpose of teacher education is to prepare teachers in ways that are critical, culturally responsive, and potentially transformative (Cochran-Smith, 2001) in the promotion of a multicultural democracy. In turn, multicultural democracy aims to incorporate all forms of diversity, e.g., race, gender, ethnicity, culture, language, ability and sexual orientation (Marri, 2005). Educating pre-service school teachers partly means teaching them to negotiate what Biesta (2004, p.234) names a “culture of accountability”. This section will investigate how institutions go about training and preparing teachers for their diverse classroom.

As diversity is increasing in schools and classrooms, teachers need to be prepared to work with learners from different backgrounds (Keengwe, 2010). Silverman (2010) suggest that pre-service teachers hold a limited view of what constitutes diversity, which affects their senses of efficacy, responsibility, and advocacy as individuals and as teachers. As such, the focus on diversity education is essential since learners have a need to develop communication skills and be able to relate to other diverse learners. Teacher training institutions have some challenges they need to overcome in preparing teachers to respond appropriately to the diversity they will encounter (Jones, 2004). Some of these challenges include lack of funds, lack of interest in the teaching profession and pressure from the government to perform.

Unfortunately some teacher training institutions have the perception that diversity is non-existent and just a difficulty to overcome (Beykont, 2002). Many teachers who wish to teach in diverse settings are unprepared for the diversity they will face in those schools, because they have learned little about it (Ladson-Billings, 2001). Keengwe (2010) recommended that pre-service teachers be equipped with diversity training to augment their experiences working with learners from other races, ethnic groups, levels of ability and cultures. Smith (2004) found that establishing sound pedagogy rooted in cultural understandings of the learners is critical given that racial, cultural and linguistic integration has the potential to increase academic success for all learners. Moore and Reeves-Kazelskis (1992) suggest that single

courses in multicultural education are successful in altering teachers' cultural paradigms. However, Cho and De Castro-Ambrosetti (2005) outline some negative paradigm shifts regarding multicultural education as well as myriad contradictory beliefs resulting from such a class. In other words, pre-service teachers sometimes develop detrimental views of multicultural education, even after 'diversity' courses.

In the United States of America (USA), multicultural teacher education aims not only to enhance knowledge and skills in culturally responsive teaching but also to develop teachers' capacities to critically assess the existing educational systems and to oppose unequal education learning opportunities provided to learners of diverse groups (Banks, 1995; Sleeter, 1991). Government departments of education can play an important role in preparing teachers for effective teaching of diverse learners in South African schools through clear policies and standards on teacher certification and teacher education programme accreditation (Akiba, Cockrell, Simmons, Han & Agarwal, 2010). These departments can lead such an effort by critically examining the characteristics of diversity-related standards and revising them in order to guide teacher education programmes to effectively prepare pre-service teachers for teaching diverse learners (Akiba et al., 2010). As long as they maintain accreditation, many teacher education programmes and schools of education in general have carte blanche, including in regard to diversity (Shudak, 2010). Although most teacher education programmes (TEPs) in the USA incorporate multicultural education in their course offerings, evidence suggests that these efforts have not been sufficient to keep pace with the changing public school learner populations (Taylor, 2010).

TEPs must embrace and instil in pre-service teachers the concept of a culturally responsive pedagogy, which Richards et al. (2007) argue will facilitate and support the achievement of all learners:

...in a culturally responsive classroom, effective teaching and learning occur in a culturally supported, learner-centered context, whereby the strengths learners bring to the school are identified, nurtured, and utilized to promote learner development... (p.64)

If transformation is to be realized, partnerships between school districts and university faculty that provide professional development must become a reality (Brown, 2007).

2.3.2 The position of the teacher

The position of the teacher is an invariable factor in this research project and various aspects of teachers has been referred to in the literature. Some of these features include the identity of the teacher, their beliefs and the role they must fulfil in the classroom.

2.3.2.1 Teacher identities

Teachers' personal identities are powerful units that are shaped by countless experiences occurring within a given social and cultural context (Gross, Fitts, Goodson-Espy & Clark, 2010). If teachers want to understand their learners it is first important for them to understand themselves, which can be done by focusing on their own strengths, weaknesses, likes and dislikes or self-reflection (Taylor, 2010). Self-reflection will in turn allow teachers to develop respect for the differences in their learners and gain the willingness to approach teaching from a multicultural perspective (Keengwe, 2010). Taylor (2010) agrees that through self-reflection they can begin to rid themselves of biases, thereby beginning to build trusting relationships with their learners which will yield greater opportunities for success. Preparation of a culturally responsive teacher includes both self-reflection and exploration of their personal histories and experiences (Gay, 2002). Teachers must discover for themselves who they are so that they can begin to confront biases that have influenced their value system (Taylor, 2010). Teachers who are either unfamiliar with reflection or comfortable using it can also keep journals of their actions, attitudes and interactions, which can be a powerful tool to enhance their ability to embrace the diversity of their learners (Gay, 2002).

In particular, theories of simultaneous multiple identities (Jones & McEwen, 2000; Stewart, 2002) and multicultural theory (Phinney, Ferguson, & Tate, 1997) serve as tools for the deconstruction of multiculturalism and diversity. Together, these theories suggest that current conceptualizations of culture and education may not adequately measure teachers' beliefs about their role in multicultural education, because they fail to account for beliefs about discrete subpopulations of multiculturalism and diversity. Identity theory has contributed to understanding of role identities and the development of a professional teaching identity. Role identities include how those forms of behaviour are assessed, negotiated and acted upon by other group members (Goffman, 1959; Stryker, 1980; Stryker & Serpe, 1982). Day, Kington,

Stobart and Sammons (2006) write that the identities and roles of teachers are influenced by learners and parents with whom they interact whilst, McLean (1999) describes how the images of self-as-person and self-as-teacher are critical in becoming a teacher because “they constitute the personal context within which new information will be interpreted and are the stuff of which a teaching persona is created” (p. 58).

2.3.2.2 *Beliefs of teachers*

Teachers’ beliefs serve as important indicators of teacher knowledge, teacher decision-making, and teacher behaviour (Castellano & Datnow 2000). Teachers’ beliefs about how diverse learners learn, and the expectations they have of different racial groups may influence the way they plan and present their lessons (Sadker, Sadker, & Zittleman, 2008). Burt et al. (2009) found that teachers with lower goals for their learners could contribute to lower achievement, especially when there is cultural discontinuity that affects attitudes and expectations. Studies in the USA have also shown that African American and Hispanic learners are more likely to be taught by inexperienced teachers without a major in the subject area they teach (Aud, Fox, & KewalRamani, 2010; Jerald & Ingersoll, 2002). As a result of the inexperience, conflicts can occur when teachers ignore different culture expressions, in turn leading to learners failing (Nieto & Bode, 2008).

Bandura (1997) suggested that human behaviour is better predicted by beliefs than consequences of actions, whilst for Pajares (1992) beliefs are developed over time through experience and cultural transmission. Beliefs may therefore be regarded as not only consistent with cultural constructions, but also as a reflection of a manner of knowing that is culturally defined. Bandura (1986) and Dewey (1933) inferred that beliefs were the most significant predictors of the decisions that individuals make throughout their lives, but as Aikenhead (1996) pointed out, crossing cultural borders requires re-negotiations of beliefs and ideas as teachers understand and assimilate the values and beliefs within different subcultures. The ability of teachers to understand their own belief systems as well as the value systems of their learners may affect how successful they are in responding to diversity in the classroom (Reinke & Moseley, 2002). However, taking beliefs as representations of the information a person has about an object, person or group of people, if based on one’s opinion rather than

on fact (Lloyd, 2003), forming a wrong opinion or perception of someone may thus be detrimental, as discussed next.

2.3.2.3 Teacher roles in diverse classrooms

Different views about the role of teachers as desirably maintaining or challenging social inequities have persisted across centuries to the current day, leading in turn to very different views about the knowledge required for teaching. Some argue that the role of teachers is one of maintaining inequalities in society by teaching learners of different classes differently (Timperley & Alton-Lee, 2008), and current literature is replete with calls for more culturally competent teachers who can embrace a culturally responsive pedagogy (Artiles et al., 2000; Brown, 2007; Cartledge & Kourea, 2008; Richards et al., 2007). Culturally responsive pedagogy comprises three dimensions: institutional, personal, and instructional. The institutional dimension reflects the administration and its policies and values, while the personal dimension refers to the cognitive and emotional processes teachers must engage in to become culturally responsive. Finally, the instructional dimension includes materials, strategies, and activities that form the basis of instruction (Artiles et al., 2000).

From the literature one can deduce another commonality, that is, apart from being culturally responsive, to ensure that effective learning takes place. A common practice that ensures effective learning for diverse groups of learners is that of cooperative learning, which helps learners from majority and minority ethnic groups learn to work with each other in class (Johnson & Johnson, 1972; Slavin, 1980). Because learners are actively involved in exploring issues and interacting with each other on a regular basis in a guided fashion, they are able to understand their differences and learn how to resolve social problems that may arise (Johnson & Johnson, 1985). In order to educate the blend of different ethnic cultures, cooperative learning lends itself particularly well to teaching learners with differing abilities in the same classroom (Glasgow, McNary & Hicks, 2006). In any classroom, regardless of diversity, there will be different ability levels so using assignments and activities that incorporate the recognition of multiple intelligences is necessary and particularly effective in responding to learner diversity. Tiedt and Tiedt (2005) concur with this, reinforcing the idea that the interaction learners experience while working together in groups has much to offer in

developing empathy. Learners talk to people with whom they might ordinarily have little to do, regardless of culture and identity, and as a result get to know each other as they share stories and identities or work together towards a common goal.

2.3.3 Teacher and learner interactions

As argued above, the interaction between teachers and learners is of great importance and can be influenced by the difference in background and the learners' specific needs. These aspects will now be explored further.

2.3.3.1 Different backgrounds

Ladson-Billings (2005) declares that the real problems facing teacher education are the disconnections between teachers and the families, learners and communities they serve. In her view, cultural mismatches between teachers and learners taint the prospects for academic success. Furthermore, this will be exacerbated as the learner population becomes increasingly diverse but the teaching and teacher educator forces become less so. For Banks (2001b, p.197), an "increasing cultural and ethnic gap exists between the nation's teachers and learners". In schools today, teachers are required to teach learners of different culture, language, race, religion and ability (Gollnick & Chinn, 2002), however, as Sadker et al. (2008) confirm, teachers struggle to teach learners with backgrounds different from their own. It is thus vital for teachers to understand the differences of the learners and how these affect learning. Brown (2004) asserts that white teachers do not possess the necessary cultural frameworks by which diverse learners make sense of the world and mismatches between the worldviews and life experiences of teachers and their learners can be devastating to learners' learning experiences (Major & Brock, 2003).

Keengwe (2010) proposes that to be effective, teachers should establish strategies to improve the learning experience of their learners, but sees no reason to believe that teachers whose backgrounds match diverse learner populations will be able to translate their experiences into meaningful and effective pedagogy. In the absence of empirical evidence to support this, there is nevertheless a persistent promotion of the theory and practice of cultural matching (Shudak, 2010), which comprises pairing minority learners with teachers of similar backgrounds in

terms of, for example, skin colour, cultural tastes, life experiences and language. The belief is that eliminating barriers of cultural miscommunication and misunderstanding between teachers and learners leads to higher learner achievement. A drawback is that cultural matching is a highly problematic concept for which there is little supportive evidence, but it goes largely unchallenged in teacher education literature (Shudak, 2010).

2.3.3.2 *Learners' needs*

Amongst the variety of factors that can contribute to the needs of a learner are learning styles, developmental levels, socio-economic status, religion, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and physical and mental abilities (Keengwe, 2010). Teachers need to be sensitive towards the learners' needs and provide support where possible. Sowers (2004) agree that teachers need to go beyond the cultural mismatch theory to ensure high expectations for all learners and it is only through open debate that the tension can be resolved between creating education systems that are accessible to all learners and at the same time meet their diverse learning needs (Sayed & Ahmed, 2011). Suh (2010) found that using technology in meeting learners' needs has worked well and yielded positive results.

For most diverse learners English is not their home language, so they struggle to master it and consequently achieve below average marks. Various tools of cognitive technology can be used to ensure that learners with language needs/barriers can effectively solve problems and think creatively (Suh, 2010). Nieto and Bode (2008) believe that diversity is valuable because it empowers teachers and learners; decreases stereotypes, prejudice, and racism; and promotes social justice and equity. However, the way in which diversity is measured may dictate the ways teachers understand their classrooms and attend to their learners' needs (Silverman, 2010).

2.4 LOCAL STANCE ON DIVERSITY

It was necessary to investigate the local literature in South Africa to see what has been written that relates to the research topic and how previous studies might aid my research. With its complex history, particularly ethnic and socio-economic, South Africa has a number of

authorities in the field who have contributed to the debate on diversity, particularly on the following significant themes.

2.4.1 Diversity education and training

At present, schooling in South Africa maintains some elements of apartheid but reflects various levels of transformation and change within and across institutions (Amin & Ramrethan, 2009). Previous teaching training modules were neither adequate to teach in a desegregated society nor suitable as preparation to teach in situations of inequity and diversity (Meier, 2005). In addition, schools themselves have been undergoing major forms of transformation directed at the curriculum, population demographics, and infrastructure (Meier, 2005). The development of positive attitudes among teachers towards learners from different ethnic, racial, linguistic and religious groups is a priority in the country's teacher education, as it is worldwide (Gagliardi, 1994), and will assist in preparing teachers for diverse classrooms. Therefore, an important aim of teacher education programmes is to encourage and help prospective teachers to change negative feelings they may have toward learners from diverse groups, and to develop positive dispositions in their place (Meier, Lemmer & Swannepoel, 1999). This in turn should contribute to improved quality of education for all learners.

Magadlela (2008) reported that including diversity modules in the preparation of teachers is necessary if they are to be ready for diverse classrooms. The challenge then for teacher education institutions is to find a way of exposing pre-service teachers to diverse contexts before the teaching practice component is exercised. Amin and Ramrathan (2009) suggest that experienced teachers in diverse classrooms should work together with teacher training institutions, using mentor programmes, to prepare teachers better for the diverse learner populations.

2.4.2 Position of the teacher

2.4.2.1 Teachers' perceptions

Classroom teaching is influenced by teachers' perceptions of learner diversity, and as Meier (2005) stated:

...the current integration of South African schools calls for teachers to actively take stock of their perceptions of learners from diverse backgrounds and develop the attitudes, knowledge, and skills that will equip them to teach effectively in culturally diverse classrooms... (p.174)

Teachers' perceptions and attitudes are formed, inter alia, by their personal experiences and professional education. Meier (2005) wrote that a teachers' perceptions are located in the individual's psyche and, as a result, along with their "attitudes and personal experience may be fundamentally at odds with the experiences of their learners who come from different backgrounds in terms of class, religion, gender and culture" (p.15). Furthermore, they are also shaped by a complex and extended process of socialisation, which takes place as a result of individual responses to the kind of teacher education received, as well as teaching experience and actual classroom practice (Meier, 2005).

2.4.2.2 Teachers' beliefs

Teachers' beliefs are powerful (Jansen, 2001; Jita, 2004) in the sense that they play a major role in determining whether learners have successful experiences in the classroom. Vandeyar (2008a) is of the opinion that life histories and personal experiences of pre-service teachers shape their belief system, whilst Pohan (1996) points out that pre-service teacher' beliefs about teaching and learning often serve as a filter through which all that is encountered during their education programmes is interpreted. Vandeyar's (2008a) study on pre-service teachers found that they showed much flexibility in accommodating the multitude of cultures and worldviews that Black learners have brought with them. Von Wright (1997) discussed the changing expectations in teacher beliefs about their role as teachers, with special emphasis placed on the socialisation process of the learners and the teacher's possible influence on it. The findings show that teachers, when entering education, carry explicit expectations which strongly reflect the values of what is considered pedagogically correct, therefore changing demands on the teacher's role bring about expectations of a shift in thinking about teaching and learning.

2.4.2.3 Teachers' identities

The question arises as to whether a teacher's sense of self should change in order to enable the required changes in their teaching, and growing interest has been expressed among researchers

on the subject of teachers' identities as they relate to the changing teacher role. Jita (2004) investigated teachers' professional identities and found they were shaped by how they perceived their work in a diverse classroom. Swart and Oswald (2008) suggest that there is a close relationship between teachers' personal and professional identities and that learning and caring have always been part of their teacher identity. Hirst (2008) argues that as classrooms become more diverse, teachers might struggle with their own identities, in view of which Amin & Ramrethan (2009) suggests that school contexts could be used to mould and re-shift teacher identities and prevent such struggles.

Since identities can be shaped by various events, it is essential that teachers be sensitive towards this and allow each learner to form his/her own identity. In this regard, teachers play a pivotal role in a class of diverse learners for they set the boundaries for placement and displacement (Vandeyar, 2008a). Ben-Peretz (2001) investigated teachers' self image and the major findings of the study were that teaching content has a significant impact on teachers' images of their professional selves, overriding even background characteristics such as education level, gender and seniority. The identities or self-image that teachers form are influenced by external factors (e.g. culture, tradition, class, and policies) and often their beliefs have the most significant influence.

2.4.3 Desegregation and learners' needs

In South Africa, desegregation has been underway for a number of years (Wolhuter, 2001) and the motivation behind it includes the ideal of equality education opportunities (Kerr, 1969); the rise and creed of Human Rights (Wolhuter, 1993) and the use of education as an instrument to mould national unity in diverse societies. In South Africa, all the considerations apply with arguably the most important and urgent being equality and redress. Throughout much of the country's history, segregation was a feature of society, including that of its education (Van Zyl, 2002), but since 1994 various policies have been developed and legislation enacted to encourage the process of desegregation in schools (Vandeyar, 2003). The South African Schools Act (1996) and Bill of Rights (Chapter Two of the Constitution of South Africa, 1996) formalised the policy of desegregation of schools aimed at creating opportunities for learners from diverse cultural backgrounds to attend schools of their choice.

The legislation made previously prohibited schools accessible to African learners as not only did the schools' psychographics undergo a rapid transformation but also their institutional arrangements, policies and ethos, as well as the attitudes of learners and teachers (Sayed, 2001).

The desegregation process in schools has intensified the need for all teachers to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will equip them to work effectively with all children, regardless of their life experiences, gender, language background, race or socioeconomic status (Meier, 2005; O'Rourke, 2008). However, desegregation in schools needs to be monitored for improvements in quality and equity and when genuine transformation is evident a new mindset should allow teachers to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Such ideals were behind the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), which Balladon (2006) argues must also meet the needs of the diverse learner population by transforming attitudes and promoting values such as *ubuntu*².

The NCS envisages qualified and competent teachers to deal with the diversity of learners and their needs in the classroom, including the acquisition of necessary social skills to enable all to work effectively with others as members of a team, group, organization and community (Booyens & Grosser, 2008). Goduka's (1999) position is that each learner has unique gifts and needs that should be taken into consideration when developing learning environments, curriculum material and instructional strategies. To this end, providing appropriate pre-service and in-service training will allow teachers to identify the needs of the learners and provide the necessary support which for O'Rourke (2008) involves "addressing those characteristics of learners that make their learning experiences different in some way from an established norm" (p.7).

In order for all learners to function effectively in their community, they need to develop their group work skills. Booyens and Grosser (2008) have found that cooperative learning is an effective approach that enhances social skills and self control, based as it is on problem-based

² Ubuntu is an African word meaning 'humanity to others'. Ubuntu also means "I am what I am because of who we all are" (Ramose, 2003).

learning and involving learners working in groups (Johnson, Johnson & Smith, 1998). It has the latent potential to improve the academic, social, affective and cognitive development of learners (Gunter et al., 2003), with other benefits including improved self-esteem, cooperation between learners of different cultures, tolerance, greater use of higher-level thinking skills and increased appreciation of different points of view (Joubert et al., 2008). In contrast to competitive and individualistic learning, learners can work together cooperatively to accomplish shared learning goals with each achieving his or hers learning goal if and only if the other group members achieve theirs. During cooperative learning, individual contest and competition decrease and teamwork is encouraged (Matthews, Cooper, Davidson & Hawkes, 1995), and the emergent learners' personality and identity influence the functioning of the group.

2.4.4 Roles of teachers today

Teachers ultimately require a system to provide support that is essential in achieving quality education and training (Cameron, 1996), and the NSE (National Education Policy Act, 1996) aimed at providing benchmarks against which the quality of teaching and learning could be measured (Ministry of Education, 2000). However, when devising a new version of the NSE roles, the human aspect and inter-personal relationships should be considered. I shall therefore discuss the current NSE (National Education Policy Act, 1996) roles of learning mediator; interpreter and designer of learning programmes; leader, administrator and manager; scholar, researcher and lifelong learner; assessor; community member, citizen and pastor; and learning area specialist, using both local and international literature specifically those of teachers as change agents, role models, mentors and reflectors.

2.4.4.1 Learning mediators (facilitators)

The teacher, who is a variable in the classroom context, is charged with the function of acting as an intermediary between the variables outside the classroom and the learners in the classroom, in order to assist them in their learning (Tylee 1992). The function of being an intermediary means that the teacher has the role of facilitating learning, as well as being a part of the school and community. Fulfilling the functions of a teacher means that the teacher is also actively engaged in learning (Harrison, 1998), learning about him or herself, the changes

in the field, the expectations of the community and society and, most importantly, learning about the learners and ways of enabling them to grow and develop. The role of the teacher has many facets, but this one of facilitating learning to a diverse classroom is arguably the most significant to this study.

Multicultural teachers must be able to effectively facilitate a class of diverse learners with the teacher (facilitator) providing circumstances that will enable learners to engage with learning opportunities and construct for themselves their understandings and skills (Tylee, 1999). Since the teacher as facilitator needs to provide opportunities for diverse learners to construct their own knowledge, cooperative learning, as argued above, is a promising strategy, the benefits of which include improved social interaction and enhanced language development. As a result, teacher-learner relationships improve and cultural barriers are broken down (Lemmer et al., 2006).

Teachers play an important role in cooperative learning as what they are doing and not doing affects the quality of learner's problem-solving process. Teachers who promote complex cognitive communication between learners boost the quality of interaction and performance (Chinn, O'Donnell & Jinks, 2000). Oortwijn et al. (2008) investigation into how high-quality helping behaviour is related to learning goals in cooperative learning identified some disadvantages, such as how it not only strains learners' cognitive capacities but also places high demands on their behaviour. The data did however reveal a positive relationship between cooperative learning and learner performance in that the former is a highly effective teaching strategy that can be used by facilitators.

Another study looked at the role of the teacher in facilitating situational interest in an active learning classroom (Rotgans & Schmidt, 2010). The study explored whether such interactional teacher characteristics as social congruence, subject matter expertise and cognitive congruence increase situational interest in learners. Hidi and Renninger (2006) define situational interest as "focused attention and an affective reaction that is triggered in the moment by stimuli which may or may not last over time" (p.113), and the findings of the study imply that being friendly, socially and emotionally connected with the learners, as well

as having a large body of knowledge, are highly predictive of how cognitively congruent a teacher is. Considering the findings it is suggested that the role teachers play in facilitating the development of learner interest and learning may not be overlooked.

Teachers transform themselves into helpers and facilitators (Wenden, 1991) when they offer suggestions and guidance in the use of learning strategies. Yang's (1998) study of the roles of the teacher in promoting learner autonomy found that teachers play an important role in helping learners understand strategies and expand their own self-direction in learning. Throughout, the teachers' role was to facilitate the structure, process, beliefs and strategies necessary for these otherwise theoretical elements of learner autonomy to become a reality. Learners need to know how to become independent and autonomous, which will bring new perspectives to the teaching profession and change traditional ideas about teacher roles (Yang, 1998).

2.4.4.2 Interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials

Another role that a teacher in a class of diverse learners has to play is that of interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials. This is particularly important since it must acknowledge the diversity issues such as colour and levels of physical ability, while also being aware of cultural diversity. Therefore, when selecting curriculum and class activities, it is important that the teacher ensures that examples of diversity are represented. Richardson (2007) noted that it is important to use real-life examples with which the learners are familiar and that are relevant in today's society. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) explain that teachers should take learners' interests, culture and maturity levels into consideration when designing programmes and deciding the length of time that must be spent on them, whilst for McClafferty and Artiles (1998), teachers may need to change programmes to suit a diversity of learners. By adapting the learning programmes teachers should become more sensitive to the needs of diverse learners, and better equipped to teach them (Zeichner, Grant, Gay, Gillette, Valli & Villegas, 1996). On the other hand, Castagno (2009) found that learners' cultural differences are used as a foundation for developing curricula and pedagogy that will assimilate them to the standard body of knowledge and set of values needed by all learners. In

either case, the role of the teacher in designing learning programmes is a significant factor in my study as it can shape the learning experience.

As a learning programme designer, the teacher selects the sequence and paces the learning in a manner sensitive to the differing needs of the learners (Ministry of Education, 2000). The NSE (National Education Policy Act, 1996) posits that a teacher must understand and interpret provided learning programmes, design original learning programmes, identify the requirements for a specific context of learning and select and prepare suitable resources for learning. This means that teachers need to take into account the learners' likes and dislikes when designing learning programmes, particularly in a class of diverse learners. Learners prefer activities that are fun and active, making edutainment in their classrooms important, yet teachers should also ensure that they are intellectually stimulating. The aim of so-called 'edutainment' is to entertain the learners while meeting curriculum objectives, and may include use of television productions, film, museum exhibits, and computer software. Such use of entertainment should attract and maintain an audience, yet incorporate deliberate educational content or messages (Bandura, 1997). Esteve (2000) agrees that teachers need to act as 'mass-media officers', modifying their role and communicating their subject effectively. Using multi-media in the classroom can help in improving teacher effectiveness and obtaining learner participation.

2.4.4.3 Leader, administrator and manager

Contributing to social justice through the transformation of education is a further role of the diverse classroom teacher, and one that focuses on the key aspects of leadership in education. Leaders are concerned with responding to diversity amongst learners (Lumby & Coleman, 2007) and a significant task of educational leadership is to support the development of learners so that they can value their lives and live in dignity, an envisioned goal of education (De Kock & Slabbert, 2008).

The administrative tasks that teachers are expected to fulfil include: investigating learner absenteeism, photocopying, typing, keeping and filing records, lesson preparation, setting up and taking down classroom resources, producing analyses of attendance figures, producing

analyses of examination results, collecting learner reports and ordering supplies and equipment (Alan, 1997). Some schools might be more privileged than others and might have support staff to assist with such functions, but in schools with limited budgets the teachers have not. Teachers at all levels are also managers, some trained others not, yet they are also expected to manage the most difficult and arguably the most demanding of professions, namely teaching (Farhad, 1995). The two roles are nevertheless complimentary, with the concept of the teacher as manager thus needing to be recognized as important in effective teaching (Cole, 2005).

2.4.4.4. Community, citizenship and pastoral role

When teachers have a strong sense of their community their morale is better and teacher commitment higher. The community helps support teaching practices, and assists teachers in addressing the uncertainty that accompanies non-routine teaching of the sort encouraged by many school reform initiatives (Gamoran, 2003). Banks (2001a) argues that teachers should help learners to develop a delicate balance of cultural, national, and global identities because of the rich diversity throughout the world. To help learners become effective citizens, teachers need to acquire reflective cultural, national, and global identifications. Because of the increasing racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity in South Africa, and the rest of the world, effective teachers in the new century must therefore help learners become reflective citizens in democratic nations (Banks, 2001a), an important factor discussed below. Demirbolat (2006) found that teachers must be sensitive to the social and cultural interests of learners and must be able to use current events in their culture to enable the learners to see their subject as relevant to their lives.

Many teachers lack confidence regarding the pastoral role that they play, for instance their responsibilities as a register teacher (form tutor), discussion with the register class on health issues (HIV/Aids, Sex and drugs), and handling discipline problems. Some teachers stated that pastoral topics should be part of a compulsory training programme at university and college (Calvert & Henderson, 1994), whilst reasons teachers lack confidence may include lack of clarity of the pastoral role and lack of support or guidance from the schools. For Calvert and Henderson (1994), “Pastoral care should be undertaken by teachers who are

prepared to examine continuously their own actions” (p.9), but although many teachers place a low priority on this aspect of their work, the importance, relevance and value it has to learners must not be forgotten. Most teachers are involved to some degree in extra-school programmes, such as sports, cultural and artistic activities, but pastoral care is generally a new role for most and seemingly one that is not easily embraced (Harley, Barasa, Bertram, Mattson & Pillay, 2000). Esteve (2000) has identified a similar role in which teachers need to act outside the school as agents of education, but though this specific role might seem insignificant it does contribute to the learners experience inside (and outside) of the classroom, as well as to improving the quality of the education.

2.4.4.5 Scholar, researcher and lifelong learner

Professional growth and development of teachers are vital if they wish to be successful and ensure better quality education. Teachers are involved in lifelong learning, in differing degrees of informality and professionalism, by the very nature of their position and career (Nicholls, 2000), and it may be expected that once their formal pre-service education is completed, the daily contact with teaching and learning continues to contribute to the ongoing development of pedagogical knowledge and skills. However, it is the nature and form of this subsequent learning that identifies teachers as committed lifelong learners (Doring, 2002).

Perry, Moore, Edwards, Acosta and Frey (2009) suggest that the pedagogical skills necessary for the required diversity-education classroom are complex and extensive. It is thus the responsibility of a multicultural teacher to have sufficient skills and experience to educate learners of a diverse nature. Teachers might enrol for extra courses or attend seminars where they can learn more about diversity and how to teach a class of diverse learners. Since teachers themselves are lifelong learners they can add to their body of knowledge and also add value to their teaching. Vandeyar (2008a) agrees that if teacher education programmes are carefully implemented they can challenge and change existing attitudes and beliefs of teachers towards a class of diverse learners.

2.4.4.6 Assessor

Assessment is a valuable tool in determining the quality of education, but it is subject to varied conceptualisation. According to Black and William (1999), the term may refer to all

activities undertaken by teachers and by their learners in assessing themselves. This provides information to be used as feedback to modify teaching and learning activities. Research indicates that improving learning through assessment depends on five deceptively simple key factors: the provision of effective feedback; the active involvement of learners in their own learning; adjusting teaching to take account of the results of assessment; the influence of assessment on the motivation and self-esteem of learners; and the need for learners to be able to assess themselves and understand how to improve (Terwilliger, 1997).

The growing importance of self-evaluation at institutional level has also resulted in attention for learner self-assessment, the main idea behind which is that it is more important to focus on development than to compare oneself with other learners. The process is as important as the outcomes because they will inform further development (Voogt & Kasurinen, 2005). Assessment is integrated in learning as a tool but traditional assessment methods often encourage surface learning (passive learning) rather than deep learning (active learning). Peer assessment is a method of motivating learners, involving them in discussion, marking and provision of feedback on other learners' work, and it is one of the successful approaches that can be used to enhance deep learning. During the peer assessment process, learners are required to think critically about what they are learning, and so contribute to the quality of learning.

In assessing the quality of a learner's work or performance, the teacher must possess a concept of quality appropriate to the task, and be able to judge the learners' work in relation to that concept. Although learners may accept a teacher's judgement without protest, they need more than summary grades if they want to develop expertise intelligently. Learners have to be able to judge the quality of what they are producing and be able to regulate what they are doing during the process. The learner has to possess a concept of the standard being aimed for, compare the actual level of performance with the standard, and engage in appropriate action, which leads to some closure of the gap (Sadler, 1989). However, Dietel, Herman and Knuth (1991) feel that it is through classroom assessment that attitudes, skills, knowledge and thinking are fostered, nurtured and accelerated or stifled. While assessment has the potential

to improve learning for all learners, historically it has acted as a barrier rather than a bridge to educational opportunity.

Many teachers feel that assessment is not their main concern, that their job is to teach well, and that assessment can be done by someone within their school who is responsible for testing or by external examinations administered by an outside agency (Ballard & Clanchy, 1991). However, if teachers accept responsibility for the progress of the learners they teach, and if they want to ensure that their learners will be judged fairly, they must have some involvement in the evaluation (Hamp-Lyons, 2003). Teachers must know enough about assessment practices to be able to look at the assessments being brought into their lessons. From this perspective, assessment is every teacher's responsibility (Hamp-Lyons, 2003).

2.4.4.7 Learning area specialist

Specialist teachers play an important role in the development of their learners' talent in many fields (Bloom, 1982). They have a powerful, long-lasting influence on their learners and can directly influence how they learn, what they learn, how much they learn and the ways they interact with one another and the world around them. Specialist teachers, with excellent subject knowledge, are better able to go beyond textbook content and involve learners in meaningful discussions and learner-centred activities (Stronge, 2007). Wenglinsky (2000) found that teachers with a degree in their subject area are associated with higher learner achievement. Subject specialist teachers embody excellence and implement good practice in their classrooms. According to Gay (2000), teachers agree that effective teaching requires mastery of content knowledge and teaching skills expressed by Howard (1999) as "we can't teach what we don't know". However, too many teachers are inadequately prepared, especially for diverse classrooms (Gay, 2000).

To summarise, the most important role mentioned above is the teacher as a facilitator of learning. Unfortunately, many teachers continue to read out of the textbook and talk for most of the lesson. Instead of focussing on the learner and making learning fun, they adhere to the old way of teaching, so-called 'talk-and-chalk'. Young and old teachers need to be familiarised with facilitation of learning and how to utilise it in their classrooms. Learning

programmes must be designed in such a way that facilitation of learning is possible and that no learner is excluded from the lesson. Cultural aspects must be taken into consideration and teachers need to be sensitive and respect the diversity of their learners when designing learning programmes. Policy describes the ideal teacher as employing clarity and precision, but does not see the real teacher and the cultural and material constraints imposed by the classroom (Harley et al., 2000). Having discussed the above roles, equal consideration is now given to the following.

2.4.4.8 Additional roles that teachers must fulfil

Various authors have identified additional roles for teachers (Belogolovsky & Somech, 2010; Esteve, 2000; Liston et al., 2008; Monzo & Rueda, 2001; Twiselton, 2004; Yendol-Silva & Dana, 2004), which although they might place additional pressure on the teachers will allow them to fulfil comprehensive roles to assist in the quality of their teaching and their learners' learning. The additional roles that will be discussed are that of change agent, role model, mentor and reflector.

- *Teachers as change agents*

The most common role of a teacher is to be an active agent of change. Teachers reach out to individuals as well as to community groups that represent various ethnic and racial groups' perspectives and experiences. Fullan (2001) has written that educational change depends on what teachers think and do, which may sound simple but also conceals certain complexities. Change agents are lifelong learners who continuously engage in a reflective process that re-examines their personal vision of why they came to teach. Change agents use reflection to help shape and reshape their goals for teaching and use continual professional growth to develop their expertise. They are constantly asking questions and seeking answers (Rasool & Curtis, 2000), and have a philosophy that informs who they are as a teacher, what they feel is important for learners to learn and how they teach in the classroom. Rather than act alone, they seek kindred spirits who share a vision which forms the basis of the change process. Rasool and Curtis (2000) argue that becoming a change agent involves having the courage to move forward and implement practices and policies that create a more equitable education for all learners

Teachers, whose educational setting has transformed over time, need to take responsibility for implementing change. They are faced with many challenges every day but even many of the more traditional teachers have seen some transformation in schools and still managed to stay in the profession. Fellow teachers might learn from them and share the same type of enthusiasm about the transformation and become agents of change. Fullan (2001) commented that the implementation of educational change involves change in practice. Fullan (2000) has identified two dimensions of capacity for change; firstly, what individuals can do to develop their effectiveness as change agents; and secondly, how the system needs to be conformed to. Educational change involves what changes to implement and how to implement them; aspects that interact with and shape each other (Fullan, 2001).

- *Teachers as role models*

A role model in the teaching context is a person who assures, motivates, guides and inspires a learner towards learning and life. Having a role model in life may be important if it facilitates growth and helps learners to set high standards and goals whilst motivating them towards improving their academic ability (Meetu, 2010). A common response from young learners who are asked “what would you like to become when you grow up?”, is “a teacher”, which explains the importance and influence that a teacher has on the learners. Learners tend to pick role models from their teachers, trainers, coaches and parents whilst a classroom, playing field, workshop, or laboratory is of great importance in providing influential learning places for learners (Delgado, 1991). The interaction that teachers have with learners in such places tends to be exemplary. As a ‘role model’, whatever the teacher does and says to the learners has a great impact on them; their behaviour goes a long way in shaping the kind of adults the learners will become.

Teachers serve as role models not only when they teach learners while they perform their duties, but also when they fulfil their role as teachers in the classroom, and they have a unique opportunity to share some of the ‘magic’ of the subject with the learners (Harden & Crosby, 2000). Martino (2008) investigated how male teachers fulfil their roles as role models in a female dominated profession yet some refer to male teachers as a ‘dying breed’ and hence, facing ‘extinction’ (Cloer, 2006; Mitchell, 2004). The study found that more male teachers are

needed to act as role models for the male learners and this would ultimately form part of a broader cultural project of re-masculinisation (Martino, 2008). Odih (2002) confirms that male role models are essential for schools and can assist underachieving male learners to maximise their potential. Pettersson, Postholm, Flem and Gudmundsdottir (2004) concur, and emphasise that focused educators who can serve as role models are in much demand at schools.

- *Teachers as mentors*

All teachers are involved to some degree in extra-school programmes, such as sports, cultural and artistic activities. Mentoring is a new role for most teachers and seemingly one that is not easily embraced (Harley et al., 2000). Mentors are characterised as caring individuals who develop relationships with their learners, and who convey the message that they are “there for” a learner through trust and unconditional love. To a great extent they may help meet the basic survival needs of overwhelmed learners and their families. On a more comprehensive level, they may connect learners and their families to outside community resources in order to find food, shelter, clothing, counselling and treatment (Henderson, Benard & Sharp-Light, 2000). At the core of caring relationships are positive and high expectations that not only structure and guide behaviour but also challenge learners to perform beyond what they believe they can do. The expectations reflect a deep belief in the learner’s innate competence and self-righting capacities. A consistent description of mentors is that they see the possibility: “They held visions of us that we could not imagine for ourselves” (Delpit, 1996, p.199). Nieto (1999) comments that teachers need first to understand and accept their own diversity before they can learn about and from their learners. In examining the socio-historical, political and cultural processes involved in the interplay between mentoring and ethnicity, Odih (2002) found that learning mentors can be useful in helping learners overcome barriers to learning.

- *Reflective teachers*

In an earlier study of excellent teachers’ rhetoric and practice, Kane, Sandretto, and Heath (2004) emphasised the role of teacher reflection in the development of inclusive learning situations and found that these expert teachers integrated personal relationships with usual academic practices through reflection. Prominent in the teachers’ minds were the relationships

between subject knowledge, skills, interpersonal relations, research and teaching intersections and their own personalities. The authors indicated that expert teachers will be mindful of all these factors when considering their approach to the diversity apparent in a particular learner group.

To summarise, literature reveals that teacher roles are indeed complex and multidimensional (Von Wright, 1997). Changing demands bring about expectations for a change from a traditional additive teacher role, in which the task is to be a transmitter of knowledge, into a communicative one, where the teacher is more of a facilitator and mentor (Von Wright, 1997). Other roles identified were those of role model (Martino, 2008), mentor (Harley et al., 2000) and change agent, as discussed by (Fullan, 2000, 2001). The different roles leave a great deal of freedom for the teachers to develop their own approach to the tasks assigned by the professional positions they choose to occupy (Gudmundsdottir, 2001). However, one limitation that emerged is that the roles that define teachers limit the opportunities to develop strong teacher-learner relationships (Pianta, 1999).

2.4.5 Synthesis of local and international literature

When comparing findings from local and international literature, it is noticeable that there are a number of similarities. First, both propose that attention must be given to educating and training pre-service teachers with regards to diversity, without which pre-service teachers will be unable to provide quality education. Second, teachers' beliefs play an important role in the teacher-learner relationship. If they have negative feelings or misperceptions of a learner it can affect the relationship and ultimately the performance. Third, a teacher's identity not only shapes him or her as a person but also influences how he or she acts in the classroom and deals with their learners. It is crucial that a teacher has an established identity and knows who he or she is, before teaching a class of diverse learners. The fourth resemblance found is that diverse learners have diverse needs and teachers need to be adequately trained in order to identify these and respond appropriately. The fifth similarity is that cooperative learning is seen as an incomparable approach to use when working with diverse groups of learners. Not only does it have a range of advantages but it is also relatively easy to implement and use in any classroom. The final similarity is the role of the teacher as one of a culturally competent

person who can embrace all the various dimensions of education while ensuring a quality education.

On the other hand, several differences were revealed in the literature. For instance, internationally, researchers are concerned with the backgrounds of the teachers and learners and how a mismatch will affect academic performance, while in South Africa the topic of desegregation is discussed, along with ways it will impact on universities and schools. By looking at the literature it is clear that diversity and the role of the teacher is an important topic of debate for scholars and much is still to be researched, hence this study. The next section will therefore review how teachers in diverse contexts go about ensuring quality teaching and learning.

2.5 QUALITY ASSURANCE IN DIVERSE CLASSROOMS

Quality assurance, a term that is new in education, has rapidly become very important (Cheng & Tam, 1997). Total quality management (TQM) is the approach most often associated with quality assurance, and refers to systems developed to monitor all processes that are part of the work of an organisation (Tenner & Detoro, 1992). Borrowing the ideas from TQM, Cheng (1995) defined education quality as the character of the set of elements in the input, process, and output of the education system that provides services that completely satisfy both internal and external strategic constituencies by meeting their explicit and implicit expectations.

Education systems have traditionally had some kind of process to assess the quality of teaching put in place to keep track of quality in education institutions and instead of trying to improve them teachers just need to use them (Allais, 2009). According to Cheng (1996) and Cheng and Tam (1997), seven models can be used to understand and manage quality in education. The *goal and specification model* sees quality in education as the achievement of stated goals and conformity to given specifications. In the *resource-input model*, quality is regarded as the natural result of achievement of quality resources and inputs for the institution. According to the *process model*, quality is seen as a smooth and healthy internal process and fruitful learning experience. The *satisfaction model* defines quality as the

satisfaction of strategic constituencies while in the *legitimacy model* it is regarded as the achievement of an education institution's legitimate position or reputation. The *absence of problems model* is self-explanatory, and finally, the *organisational learning model* considers quality as continuous development and improvement. These seven models may be used to provide teachers with appropriate resources to ensure quality in their diverse classrooms.

2.5.1 International perspective on quality assurance

Some argue that a good quality education is inclusive, relevant and democratic (Fraser, 2008; Sen, 2009, 1 999; Tikly & Barrett 2011). Of these three characteristics, the democratic is the most fundamental and underpins the other two. Education can only truly be inclusive and relevant if its goals are continuously the subject of open democratic debate. It is only through open debate that one can hammer out the implications of sustainability and linguistic diversity for educational goals and processes (Bangay & Blum, 2010). Teachers do not have the answer to quality because it is never entirely theirs to possess, but belongs also with the many policymakers, educational professionals, learners and parents, who influence and participate in education in various diverse contexts around the world (Barrett, 2011). Education quality would be framed in general terms of learning opportunities for all that are inclusive, relevant and democratic (Barrett, 2011). Problematically, the achievement gap among learners will continue until policymakers, administrators, and educators pay attention to the existing inequality in learning opportunities and make a concerted effort to make redress for the previous inequality (Akiba et al., 2010).

The pursuit of educational equity has long been a goal of reform efforts in the USA yet creating a system of education in which all children have equal access to quality instruction and widely available opportunities to learn to their fullest human potential has been elusive (Jordan, 2010). More than half a century ago, the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision settled persistent concerns about the degree to which access to quality schooling was based on race (Ball & Samy, 2006; Gutiérrez & Jaramillo, 2006), however, structural inequality in education based on race and class, which was overt and legally sanctioned prior to *Brown*, has subsequently become less clear and the demographic landscape in the public schools has become more complex. School desegregation was an affirmative action policy, assuring some

black and Latino learners access to schools that previous generations could not attend (Jordan, 2010). ‘The No Child Left Behind Act’ (NCLB) represents perhaps the most recent and significant policy initiative to redress inequity at a national level. Equity is not about providing the same education to all learners regardless of race, social class, or gender, but rather, because of increasing cultural and linguistic diversity, it is advantageous to define educational equity in terms of providing knowledge, skills and worldviews that enable social mobility (Jordan, 2010)

Orfield and Lee (2005) have asserted that children in racially and ethnically segregated schools often experience “conditions of concentrated disadvantage, including less experienced or unqualified teachers, fewer demanding courses and more remedial courses, and higher teacher turnover” (p.4). If one assumes the aim of education is to produce learner’s learning, then one should ask whether learning outcomes are distributed randomly across race, ethnicity, and social class (Jordan, 2010). Shevlin et al. (2004) showed that teachers in general have a limited range of ways in which they understand diversity, and hence a limited range of responses to teaching diverse learners; on the other hand, some teachers are utilising diversity as an essential resource and exemplify teaching excellence (Gordon et al., 2010).

King and Watson (2010) posit that teaching excellence for all learners is guided by five principles: accountability for learner achievement and empowerment; a belief in the power and the intersection of accomplished teaching and the unlimited potential of each learner; the use of a theory of learning to guide accomplished teaching practice and learner learning; content expertise and the ability to connect content to learners’ lived experiences in and out of school; and expertise in pedagogy that builds confidence, affirms effort, and uses data to guide a step-by-step, personalized teaching and learning process.

2.5.2 Local stance on quality assurance

In South Africa, there are two quality assurance organisations that operate directly under the Minister of Education. The first, Umalusi, monitors quality in General Education and Training (GET) and Further Education and Training (FET), using both traditional methods of monitoring quality in education and more modern quality assurance methods (Young &

Allais, 2004). The second is the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC), which monitors quality in higher education. The responsibility for monitoring the quality of schools currently rests with the DoE, which has implemented a system known as the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), which attempts to incorporate the evaluation of schools, the monitoring of teacher performance, and support for teachers in their work (Allais, 2009). IQMS is thus a potentially valuable system to monitor teachers and ensure their preparations and lessons reflect quality in their classrooms, diverse or otherwise.

One of the major challenges facing teachers today is how to meet the needs of diverse learners while still providing quality education. Although most teachers wish to provide all learners with the best possible education, Glasgow et al. (2006) comment that diverse learners often receive a less-than-equitable learning experience. It is therefore essential that all teachers acquire the appropriate attitudes, knowledge and disposition needed to work effectively with learners who come from varied cultural or class backgrounds (Vandeyar, 2008a). It is important to realise that not only will the teacher and the learner be different, but also that learners differ from one another. Quality in diverse situations requires that teachers plan an inclusive classroom in which learners learn about each other and learn to respect each other (Tiedt & Tiedt, 2005).

In order to assure quality in education, Cameron (1996) proposes that teachers be rigorously prepared, both in pedagogy and subject matter, to facilitate a class of diverse learners. Cameron identified three principles to guide teachers through the quality assurance process: firstly, professional development of teachers should be redefined. Teachers need to be trained in a culturally responsive manner that will allow them to facilitate their multicultural classrooms more effectively. Secondly, the quality of the learners' achievement should be the responsibility of the teacher. Teachers of diverse learners must go beyond their prescribed roles and assist them in any way possible to reach their maximum potential. Finally, teachers and teacher training institutions should take greater responsibility for the quality of the teaching force. If quality teachers are supplied by training institutions, with the relevant qualifications, schools will have fewer problems in filling the various vacancies available.

Educational excellence in schools, which are now predominantly multicultural with a diverse learner population, cannot be achieved without educational equity. Equity in education means equal opportunities for all learners to develop to their fullest potential (Bennett, 1999). It is necessary to investigate how teachers treat the different learners in their classrooms. If the treatment is detrimental to the learner, he or she will not receive quality education and can therefore not reach his or her full potential. Teachers often make snap judgements about learners, based on their perceptions, and thus treat them differently. Many teachers interact with learners differently according to race and socio-economic status. Teachers must be careful not to become 'judges of deviance' and, as Cameron (1996) argues only teachers who are prepared to make judgements about learners and what they need to achieve can help learners achieve a better quality of education.

Various factors contribute to teachers neglecting their role as quality assurors, some of which are teacher shortages and increased workload, such as extramural activities and inadequate compensation. Shanker (1996) finds that the increasing diversity of the learner population puts additional pressures on the knowledge and skills of the teachers in trying to achieve the targets set by the various role-players. If individual teachers work to introduce quality into their teaching by working extra hours it is rare that the dedication is recognised or valued. Nevertheless, when there is a teaching failure, e.g. low matriculation pass rate, teachers are blamed immediately and directly for the failure and its consequences. The only way in which the challenges can be eliminated is through legislative action and collective bargaining.

Monnapula-Mapesela and Moraka (2008) found that quality assessment processes should be transparent and open to the various stakeholders. Accountability is an indispensable part of quality assurance from which parents, learners and other stakeholders benefit greatly. Quality assurance processes encourage both schools and teachers to self-search and reflect on their performances, while quality assurance processes are transformational and change the norm of doing things, resulting in improvement of service delivery in education. In order for teachers to improve the quality in their diverse classroom, 'good teachers' who exhibit excellent practice are needed. It is thus important that 'good teachers', with the necessary skills and knowledge, are recruited to achieve the targets set by the role-players. According to Slade

(2001), the features of a ‘good teacher’ are built around their personality, and their ability and willingness to establish relationships of mutual respect and friendships with their learners. Slade explains that ‘good teachers’ are risk-takers, overall ‘good’ people and motivators of learners to achieve more. Liston et al. (2008) concur that ‘good teachers’ do more than boost learner achievement, they also shape lives.

To conclude, today, quality teaching, where it is found, owes more to the extraordinary dedication of excellent teachers than to their having optimum working conditions to help them with a heavy workload that results in fragmentation of their work and inevitably quality suffers (Woods, Jeffrey, Troman & Boyle, 1997). The role of teachers is therefore to reflect on their teaching and work to ensure quality teaching and learning.

2.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

As evident in both international and local literature, teachers in diverse classrooms need to be culturally responsive. Gay (2000) defines ‘culturally responsive teaching’ as using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences and performance styles of diverse learners to make learning more appropriate and effective. Taylor (2010), on the other hand, explains culturally responsive teachers as those who:

...believe that culture deeply influences the way children learn and when given the responsibility of teaching learners from diverse backgrounds, their attitudes reflect an appreciation of the cultural, linguistic, and social characteristics of each of their learners... (p.26)

Gay identifies six principles that comprise what she terms ‘culturally responsive teaching’, namely validity, comprehensiveness, multi-dimensionality, empowerment, transformation and emancipation. Banks and Banks (1995) offer a similar perspective, arguing that multicultural education must include content integration; the knowledge construction process; prejudice reduction; equity pedagogy and empowering school and social culture. Gay’s principles served as my lens through which I viewed my research and are elaborated upon as follows:

Firstly, culturally responsive teaching should be *validating*. According to Gay, validation refers to the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups that affect learners’

approaches to learning and as worthy content in the curriculum. Gibson and Dembo (1984) realised the importance of validating teaching since it contributes to teacher effectiveness.

The second principle of being a culturally responsive teacher is that one's teaching should be *comprehensive*, meaning that culturally responsive teachers develop intellectual, societal, emotional and political learning by using cultural references that symbolise the comprehensiveness of culturally responsive teaching. Ladson-Billings (1994) observed the values being implemented in various classrooms and noted the success.

Next, culturally responsive teaching must be *multi-dimensional*. This principle involves curriculum and learning content, a constructive learning environment, learner-teacher interactions and assessments. Wong (1998) agrees that multi-dimensional education focuses on the different elements of education and believes that human, financial, social and cultural capital influence the learners' learning experiences.

Empowering learners is another principle of being a culturally responsive teacher. Being a culturally open teacher empowers learners to be better human beings and more successful learners who can grow up and contribute to sustainable communities. Teachers must motivate and encourage learners to enhance their potential for success. Shor (1992) explains empowerment as a critical-democratic pedagogy for self and social change. Empowering learners may provide them with the skills to survive, enter into job opportunities and become active citizens of a meaningful and compassionate community.

Culturally responsive teachers must also be *transformative*. For Boyd and Myers (1988), transformative education "calls to public expression of those fears and terrors as well as those hopes and yearnings regarding growth and change that have been denied for so long and suppressed so deeply" (p.272). Culturally responsive teachers respect the cultures and experiences of the diverse classroom and use the differences as a teaching resource. The 'rainbow nation', as South Africa is sometimes referred to, symbolises a rich diversity and teachers are in a favourable situation where they have unlimited, factual and real-life resources with which to work.

Finally, culturally responsive teaching should be *emancipatory*. Culturally responsive teachers are valuable, given that they guide learners in understanding that there is not a single version of the truth, and thus liberate learners from oppressive education (Gay, 2000). For example, teachers could use windows and mirrors to accomplish this particular principle. For young children multicultural stories can act as a mirror, reflecting and validating their cultural identity. For learners from diverse backgrounds, these stories are windows into a new realm of experiences (Cox & Galda, 1990).

The six principles are useful in determining if quality in education takes place in diverse classrooms. These principles can be used to engage the findings of the study with findings of the literature review and the conceptual framework. The six principles are graphically presented in figure 2 (below):

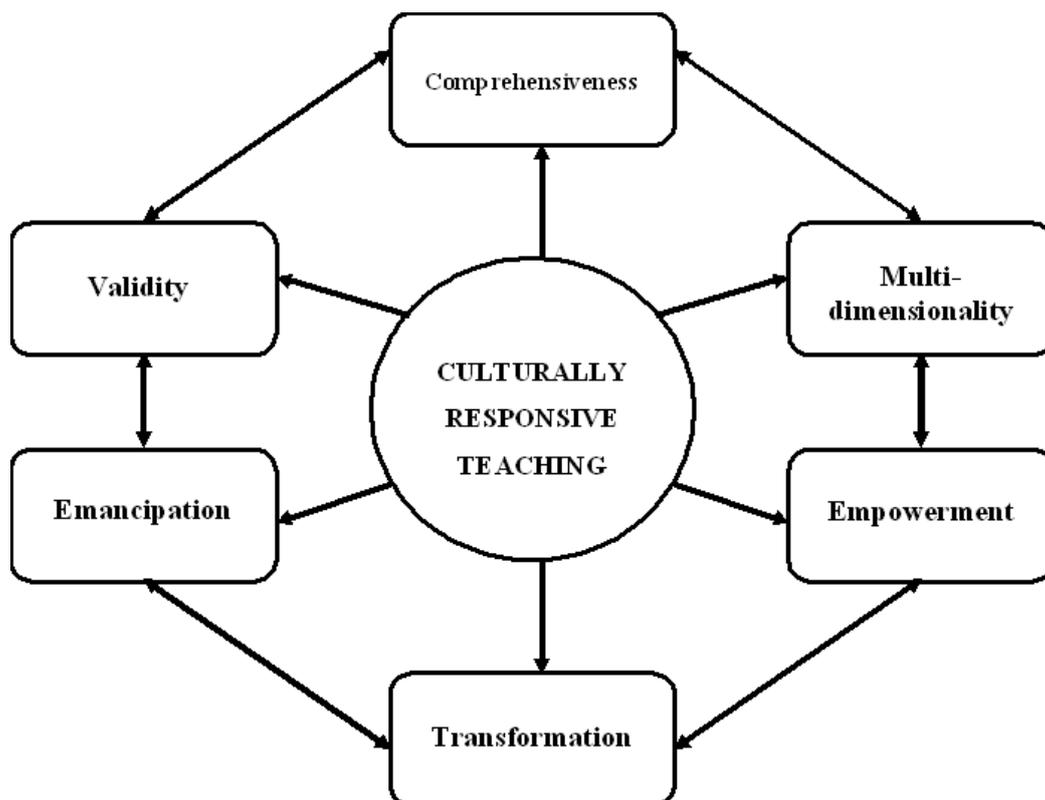


Figure 2. Principles of culturally responsive teaching.

Each principle can exist on its own and contribute towards being a culturally responsive teacher; however these principles are also interrelated and complement each other. Not all principles need to be present for a teacher to be culturally responsive. Various factors such as learners, resources, policies and parental involvement can limit the necessity of each of the principles. According to Gay (2000), the following elements of culturally responsive teaching go hand-in-hand with the principles: developing a knowledge base about cultural diversity; including ethnic and cultural diversity content in the curriculum; demonstrating caring and building learning communities; communicating with ethnically diverse learners; and responding to ethical diversity in the delivery of the instruction.

Developing a sound cultural diversity knowledge base is crucial for multicultural teachers. Culture encompasses many things, some of which are more important for teachers to know than others because they have direct implications for teaching and learning (Smith, 1998). The knowledge that teachers need to have about cultural diversity goes beyond mere awareness of, respect for and general recognition of the fact that ethnic groups have different values of expressing similar values in various ways (Gay, 2000). Developing a cultural diversity knowledge base is needed to make schooling more interesting and stimulating.

Including ethnic and cultural diversity content in the curriculum is the responsibility of the teacher and teachers need to learn how to convert this type of content into culturally responsive curriculum designs and instructional strategies. According to Gay (2000), three different curriculums exist in schools. The first is the formal curriculum, approved by the policy and governing bodies of education departments and systems. Culturally responsive teachers know how to determine the multicultural strengths and weaknesses of curriculum designs and instructional materials, and make the changes necessary to improve the overall quality (Wade, 1993). One specific way to begin this curriculum transformation process is to teach teachers how to do deep cultural analyses of textbooks, and revise them for better representations of cultural diversity (Gay, 2000). The second is the symbolic curriculum (Gay, 1995), that include images, symbols, icons, mottoes and other artefacts that are used to teach learners knowledge, skills, morals and values. Culturally responsive teachers are aware of the power of the symbolic curriculum as an instrument of teaching and use it to help

convey important information about ethnic and cultural diversity. According to Cortés (2000, 1995, 1991), the third curriculum is the societal curriculum, which is the knowledge, ideas and impressions about ethnic groups that are portrayed in the mass media. Television programmes, newspapers, magazines, films, and social networking are much more than factual information or entertainment. They engage in ideological management (Spring, 1992) and construct knowledge (Cortés, 1995) because their content reflects and conveys cultural, societal and political values and knowledge.

Demonstrating caring and building learning communities is a critical component of preparing culturally responsive teachers. Creating classroom climates that are conducive to learning for learners as well as pedagogical actions are as important as multicultural curriculum designs in implementing culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2000). Teachers have to care so much about their learners and their achievement that they accept nothing less than high-level success from them and work diligently to accomplish it (Foster, 1997). Building a community among diverse learners is another essential element of culturally responsive teaching. Learning communities help learners understand that knowledge has moral and political elements and consequences which obligate them to take social action to promote freedom, equality and justice for everyone (Gay, 2000).

Cross-cultural communication is useful in communicating between teachers and learners. Samovar, Porter and McDaniel (1991, p12.) explain that culture influences “what we talk about, how we talk about it, what we see, attend to, ignore, how we think and what we think about”. Determining what ethnically diverse learners know and can do as well as what they are capable of knowing and doing, is often based on how well teachers can communicate with them (Cazden, John & Hymes, 1985). Being either a speaker or a listener is an interchangeable role played by teachers and learners. Teachers need to be sensitive and accommodating to learners from various ethnic backgrounds. Different communication styles can be problematic in the classroom for both teachers and learners. For instance, uninformed teachers may consider some styles rude and take inappropriate action to discipline the learners (Gay, 2000).

Responding to ethnic diversity, in the delivery of the instruction, deals with the delivery of the lesson to ethnically diverse learners. Matching instructional techniques to the learning styles of the diverse learners is an essential component of culturally responsible teachers. Spindler (1987) suggested establishing continuity between the modus operandi of ethnic groups and school cultures in teaching and learning. According to Gay (2000) and Spring (1995), cooperative learning arrangements fit well with groups of diverse learners. Cultural characteristics provide the criteria for determining how instructional strategies should be modified for diverse learners.

The conceptual framework has aligned my research by providing clear links from the literature to the research goals and questions, informing the research design, providing reference points for discussion of literature, methodology and analysis of data. Finally, it contributed to the trustworthiness of the study by ensuring that the research is credible, transferable and dependable and that the findings are ‘worth paying attention to’ (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, p.290).

2.7 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter has outlined the theoretical underpinnings and views that added shape and meaning to my study, in particular the outlook on diversity, the roles of a teacher and quality assurance. Both international and local literature was consulted to develop a theoretical framework. Various highlights from the literature added substance to the study, such as the abundance on literature available on diversity, the roles of the teacher and quality assurance. A gap was detected in the lack of literature on how teachers have adjusted to their role and how diversity has influenced these roles. The sections on multicultural education, diversity and quality assurance allowed me to order my thoughts and prepared me for the next phase of the study. Diversity for me is about incorporating the various approaches into one school of thought appropriate for each individual or teacher. Quality education for me is ensuring that each learner, regardless of their differences, receives the best education possible with any means possible. My conceptual framework allowed me to look at the research in a particular way and provides a link to the next chapters.

The main impression from the literature is that more attention must be given to the training that teachers receive with regards to training. Teachers' beliefs, identities and attitudes can shape their teaching style and how they treat diverse learners. The needs of learners cannot be overlooked and teachers need to use creative strategies, such as cooperative learning to include the diverse learners in the lesson and ensure their participation. The roles as prescribed by the NSE are the favoured by local researchers, yet additional roles that require teachers' attention are identified from local and international sources. Quality assurance and quality education are under constant discussion and provided useful information and topics to consider. Chapter Three will look at the research design chosen for this study, the selection of the participants and how the data was collected and analysed. The chapter will also include the quality criteria applicable to the study and the ethical strictures adhered to.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH STRATEGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research methodology, the choice of which is influenced by the purpose of this study, the research questions, literature review and conceptual framework. As such, the current chapter reviews the research paradigms in section 3.2, while section 3.3 is dedicated to the research design. The selection of participants will be justified in section 3.4, after which the data collection process is explained (section 3.5). Section 3.6 is used to discuss the data analysis selected for this study. Since quality assurance is an essential element in this study, section 3.7 elucidates the various quality assurance criteria utilized in the study. Section 3.8 clarifies the ethical considerations that had to be adhered to.

3.2 META-THEORETICAL PARADIGM

As the researcher, the paradigm that best describes the research strategy employed is a combination of constructivism and interpretivism. Constructivism, as a worldview, sees learning as an active process by which people actively construct or create their subjective representations of objective reality (Huitt, 2003). For Brooks and Brooks (1993) it is less a theory about teaching than one about knowledge and learning. In the early years, theorists such as Vygotsky (1978), Piaget (1953) and Dewey (1938) stated that learning was an active contextualised process of constructing knowledge rather than acquiring it. For the purpose of this study, constructivism is part of the framework through which I focus on the inner mental activities of learners and how they learn in the classroom.

Constructivists argue that knowledge cannot exist outside the mind; truth is not absolute; and knowledge is not discovered but constructed by individuals based on experiences (Crotty,

1998; Fosnot, 1996; Hendry, Frommer, & Walker 1999). From a constructivist perspective, knowledge is not passively received from the world or from reliable sources but constructed by individuals or groups making sense of their experiential worlds (Maclellan & Soden 2004). Individuals are assumed to construct their own meanings and understandings, and this process is believed to involve interplay between existing knowledge and beliefs and new knowledge and experiences (Richardson, 1997, 2003; Schunk, 2004). Richardson (2003) identifies several principles as the premises of the constructivist pedagogy which suggest that the teacher first recognize and respect learners' backgrounds, beliefs, assumptions, and prior knowledge. The teacher also provides abundant opportunities for group dialogue; establishes a learning environment that encourages learners to examine, change, and even challenge their existing beliefs and understandings. This may be achieved through meaningful, stimulating teaching, and by introducing the formal area of subject matter into the conversation through a loosely structured instruction and the use of technological tools such as interactive boards and the Internet (Yilmaz, 2008).

Researchers have different interpretations and experiences about a situation and construct their own meaning accordingly. This makes constructivism, in conjunction with interpretivism, suitable paradigms for this study. According to Schwandt (1994), constructivism is synonymous with interpretivism, since the latter emphasises the meaningful nature of people's participation in social and cultural life. Interpretive researchers analyse the meanings people give to their own and others' actions and how these interpretations influence their view of life (Hammersley, 2002). On the other hand, Bashkow (2004) believes that cultures can be understood by studying what people think about, their ideas, and the meanings that are important to them. Interpretivism is also oriented toward regulating and maintaining current social order (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). However, unlike structural functionalism, interpretivist thought holds that reality is multiple and subjectively constructed (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). Interpretivists strive for insight and understanding of contextually-specific situations with recognition that multiple contingency solutions exist (Reitzug, 1994).

Jonassen (1996) defines constructivism, from the educational perspective, as individuals producing and constructing their own personal knowledge. He distinguishes this from

interpretivism whereby the researcher is the passive interpreter of knowledge, as in the traditional educational model. The learning environment changes completely in the new paradigm to one that is more learner-centred. To effectively manage the learner-centred approach, the teacher plays multiple roles and becomes a facilitator, coach, motivator or the gate-keeper of all knowledge for the diverse learners (Jonassen, 1996). To conclude, constructivism is a highly effective method of teaching from which all learners can benefit, since collaboration and social interactions are incorporated (Powell & Kalina, 2009).

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a general plan or blueprint of the investigation which the researcher uses to obtain evidence to answer the research question (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, Poggenpoel, Schurink & Schurink, 1998, p.80). Mouton (1996) defines the research design as “a set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in order to reach a certain goal” (p.107). This research followed a qualitative mode of inquiry in order to investigate how teachers ensure quality education in a class of diverse learners. I focused on how individual teachers interact with a range of diverse learners and describe these interactions against available literature and information obtained during the data collection and data analysis phase.

A qualitative research design is a research methodology used extensively by scientists and researchers studying human behaviour and habits. According to Brotherson (1994), qualitative research is characterised by three key assumptions. The first is based on a belief that multiple constructions of reality exist, so qualitative research will seek to find an understanding of human relationships in the web of interaction and interconnected factors. The second assumption is that in qualitative research, the researcher and participant interact and influence each other to a certain extent. The qualitative research methods that are used in this study, for instance, interviews, observation and focus group discussions, allow for interaction and could lead to understanding attitudes, behaviours and context from different points of view (Richard, 2003). The third assumption in qualitative research is primarily a matter of perspective. Considering the varied experiences participants have had in a multicultural classroom, the third assumption is considered to be relevant. The focus of

qualitative research is on the participant in the original setting. According to Creswell (1994), qualitative research occurs in natural settings, where human behaviour and events normally occur. For this study, the teachers and learners were observed and interviewed in their natural settings namely the classrooms, offices and media centres.

In qualitative research, the researcher becomes involved with the phenomenon. A qualitative researcher is at times prepared to be part of that which is being studied (Mouton & Marais, 1990). Qualitative research can be objective as the researcher involves him/herself in the situation, or immerses him/herself in the persons s/he is studying, but is nevertheless able to objectively transfer the information in the data with depth and detail (Silverman, 1997). With this study I represent the participants' views fairly and portrayed them as consistently as possible, with their meaning.

The research method used in this study involved multiple, descriptive qualitative case studies thus providing tools to study complex phenomena within their contexts. Qualitative case studies are an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. (Baxter & Jack, 2008). This ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens only, but rather through a variety of lenses, thus allowing for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood. Being descriptive enables the end product of a case study to be a rich and thick description of the phenomenon under study (Merriam, 1998). Case studies allowed me to obtain a clear, in-depth understanding (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001) of the way secondary school teachers manage a class of diverse learners while still ensuring quality education. Yin (1984) defines case study research, firstly, as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context”; secondly, “the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”; and thirdly, “multiple sources of evidence are used in collecting the data” (p.23). Case study research is an ideal design for understanding and interpreting observations of education phenomena (Merriam, 1998). The use of interviews, observations and focus group discussions to collect information is thus suitable for a qualitative case study.

When using multiple cases, each case is treated as a single case. Each case's conclusions can then be used as information contributing to the whole study (Stake, 1995). According to Yin (2003), case studies need not take a long time, as this misconception confuses the case study method with ethnography. A limitation to using case studies is that findings are not generalisable to the rest of the population. Case studies are also limited by the sensitivity and integrity of the researcher (Riley, 1963), since the researcher is the primary research instrument. One of the strengths however is that one can establish cause and effect by observing effects in real life contexts (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). Merriam (1998) concurs that case studies are anchored in real-life situations and result in rich and holistic accounts of the phenomena. Case studies offer insight and illuminate meanings that expand the readers' experiences however, for the current research, the strengths outweighed the limitations and as a result, a case study design was used.

Many well-known case study researchers, such as Stake (1995), Simons (1980) and Yin (1984), have written about case study research and suggested techniques for organising and conducting the research successfully. This introduction to case study research draws upon their work and proposes six steps that should be used:

- Determine and define the research questions
- Select the cases and determine data gathering and analysis techniques
- Prepare to collect the data
- Collect data in the field
- Evaluate and analyze the data
- Prepare the report.

These six steps allowed me to organise my thoughts and investigate the complex social units and multiple variables of potential importance. The steps also assisted with the process I had to follow in order to complete the research project.

3.4 SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Selection of participating schools and individuals was conducted as follows.

3.4.1 Selecting the schools

Convenience sampling was used to select three secondary schools in Pretoria, South Africa. According to Maree (2007), convenience sampling refers to situations where population elements are selected based on the ease and convenient availability. The schools are situated in different districts in Pretoria, namely Tshwane North and Tshwane South. While each school has undergone transformation and integration regarding learners of colour, the challenges faced by each of the schools differs due to learner demographics, location and school policies. These schools were chosen since they are close to each other and so limited the time and driving needed to reach them. The schools were given the pseudonyms ‘West Quay’, ‘Kings Cross’ and ‘Stratford’.

3.4.2 Selecting the teachers

Two teachers were purposively selected in each of the three schools, so a total of six teachers were used. Purposive sampling involves selecting participants according to pre-selected criteria relevant to the research question (Maree, 2007). The criteria for selecting the teachers were, firstly, the length of time that they had been teaching and, secondly, where they had received or completed their teacher training. I was curious to investigate the difference between teachers trained in a monocultural institution as opposed to a multicultural institution. If possible, the teachers had to reflect the diversity of South Africa’s population. The principal of each school assisted with identifying and selecting the teachers. The teachers were informed about the purpose of the study and after they accepted the invitation to participate a more thorough meeting was scheduled to discuss its details and to select the classes that would be observed. Double periods were selected for the observations and eliminated unnecessarily disruption to the learners’ timetable.

3.4.3 Selecting the classes and learners

Convenient sampling was used to decide which teachers’ classes and learners to select. Two classes per teacher were selected for the observations and, from each class, five learners were randomly selected and invited to attend the focus group discussion. Both male and female learners were selected, and these varied between Grades 9 and 12. Learners from Grade 8 were not considered since participants were needed who could provide rich, thick and

descriptive information. The Grade 8 learners were still new to the school and would not be able to provide detailed information about the school, teachers or their experiences. Older, more mature learners are known to speak their minds and will be brutally honest when asked questions about their school and teachers. All three schools have a diverse and multicultural learner population; hence the selected learners were representative of South Africa's demography.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

When collecting data in a research study, any method may be employed to address the research question posed (Merriam, 1998). The instruments I used during the collection of the data included semi-structured interviews, structured observations and focus group discussions. Since case study research generates a large amount of data from multiple sources, systematic organisation of the data was important (Yin, 1984). This prevented me from being overwhelmed by the amount of data and it prevented me from losing sight of the original research purpose and questions (Hamel, Dufour & Fortin, 1993).

Qualitative studies accept researcher subjectivity as something that cannot be eliminated, but the researcher works as the 'research instrument' in the data gathering process (Maree, 2007). As such, my involvement in the challenging real-world situation of the research context was essential, since I needed to record those changes. By attending the lessons as an observer, I was able to immerse myself in the research situation created in the classroom. Even though my role as interviewer was an active one (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001), I attempted not to affect or alter the unique dynamics of the classroom situation (Nieuwenhuis, 2007), and the role I assumed was a neutral one.

With qualitative research, the researcher knows what the problem is and has identified the issues that will be investigated in order to address it, but the researcher does not know what will be discovered, what or whom to concentrate on or what the final analysis will be like (Merriam, 1998). It is therefore necessary to collect all relevant data and organise it to ensure

sufficient data is available for analysis. Case studies are thus shaped by the data that was collected and the analysis that accompanies the entire process.

Data collection took place during formal visits to the teachers and learners at the sampled schools, in the second term of 2010, during the months of March, April and May. The principals and teachers were notified in writing about the scheduled data capture. Information packets, with an instruction letter to the teacher and letters of consent for the parents, were delivered at the schools a month before the observations were scheduled. The teachers had ample time to distribute the letters to the selected classes and collect the signed permission slips. The data collection timeframe had to be adjusted because of the shortened school term, due to a football World Cup. As a result, the June and July examinations started earlier and the observations had to be scheduled accordingly, since no lessons would be taught during the examinations. The following illustration was used to order my thoughts and arrange participants in order to assign pseudonyms:

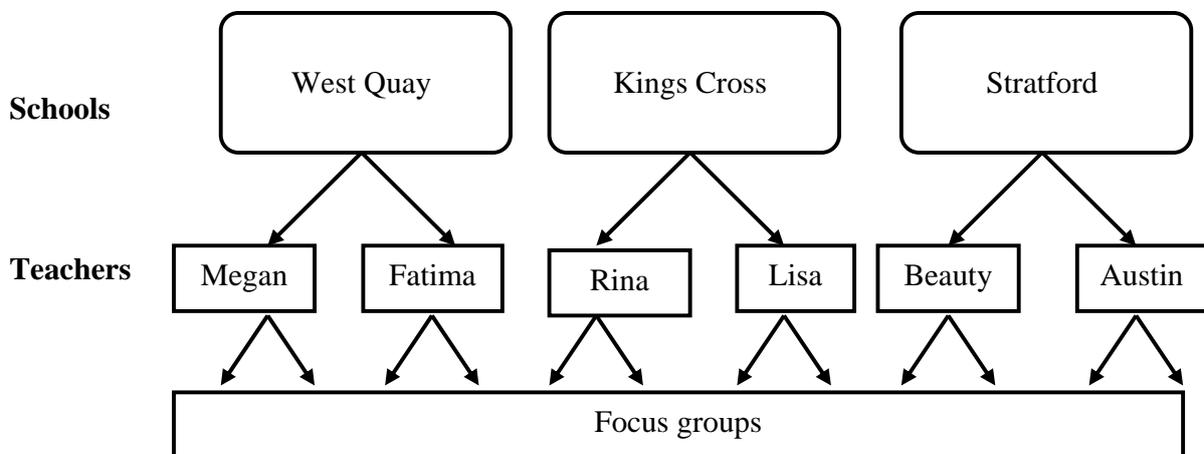


Figure 3. Visual illustration of participants and pseudonyms

In case study research, the main purpose of an interview is to obtain specific information relevant to the study. Patton (1980) believes that during interviews one finds out those things which cannot be directly observed, such as feelings, thoughts or intentions. Interviews allow the interviewer to enter into the person's perspective (Merriam, 1998). In a semi-structured

interview, certain information is desired from all the participants and the interview is guided by a list of questions or issues to be explored. This kind of format allows the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging world-view of the respondent and to new ideas on the topic (Merriam, 1998). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the principals and teachers.

3.5.1 Principal interview

A semi-structured interview was held with each principal of the three schools. The interview provided insight and a better understanding of the school, how it operated and its background. Both open- and closed ended-questions were used, including a Likert scale that applied to some. Certain questions were similar to the information Vandeyar and Killen (2006) gathered for their study on desegregation in South African classrooms. All interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim and coded to assist with the data analysis. See example of principal's interview questions at Appendix B.

3.5.2 Teacher pre-interview

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the two teachers from each school. Ideally, the pre-interview should have been scheduled prior to the classroom observation; however, due to timetabling and other requirements this was not always possible. The pre-interview was used to explain the purpose of my research and how that data would be collected, which was beneficial as it made clear certain expectations to avoid later disappointment. Ethical considerations, learner selection and anonymity were also discussed. I assured the teachers that all information would be treated sensitively and in strict confidence. I was selective in what I told them because I did not wish to give away too much information, and thus influence the findings. However, I did not deceive the teachers about the nature of the research.

The pre-interview focused on the teachers' perspectives of teaching a class of diverse learners, how they dealt with discipline, their roles in the classroom and how they ensured quality teaching and learning. Both open- and closed-ended questions were used in the pre-interview, however, more open-ended questions were used to allow the teachers to provide

useful and interesting data. All interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim and coded to assist with the data analysis. See example of teacher's pre-interview questions at Appendix C.

3.5.3 Teacher post-interview (reflection)

After the observations, a semi-structured post-interview was arranged with each of the teachers, during an administrative (free) period or after school. This interview served as the teachers' reflection on the lesson. The teachers were asked to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the lesson, as well as the role they fulfilled and what quality assurance practices they used. The purpose of reflection is to capture the thoughts and feelings of the participants, in this case the teachers about the lessons. Darling-Hammond (2005) suggests that when confronted with change, teachers behave in a certain way, knowingly or unknowingly. Reflective teachers tend to evaluate their practice in terms of how they can change their teaching styles to be more effective. Korthagen and Kessels (1999) refer to reflection as an ongoing process of analysing, teaching and learning situations under the guidance of an expert, to develop insights into teaching. It is thus necessary for teachers to reflect on and analyse their own practice. All interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim and coded to assist with the data analysis. See example of teacher's post-interview questions at Appendix D and follow-up questions (asked after the data collection to clarification certain points) at Appendix E.

3.5.4 Observations

Structured classroom observations were conducted over a two-week period with each teacher to see if any patterns emerged during the months of March, April and May 2010. The observations occurred in the natural setting of the classroom and were used to identify the diverse nature of the class, how the learners interacted and responded to the teacher, and vice versa, and to determine if quality education was ensured. An observation schedule, with set criteria, was used to record the observations and was divided into various sections to facilitate the recording of and reporting on the information. The schedules were typed onto a computer and coded to assist with the data analysis.

According to Kidder (1981), an observation is a research tool when it serves a formulated purpose, is planned deliberately, recorded systematically and subjected to checks and controls on validity and reliability. Critiques of observation as data collection instrument point to the highly subjective and therefore unreliable nature of human perception (Patton, 1980). An advantage, however, is that an outsider will notice things that have become routine to the participants themselves, which may lead to understanding the context. The observer sees things firsthand and can use his or her own knowledge and expertise in interpreting what is observed (Selltiz, Wrightsman, & Cook, 1976). See example of observation schedule questions at Appendix F.

3.5.5 Learner focus groups

A focus group is a form of qualitative research in which a group of learners are asked about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs and attitudes towards a product or service (Henderson, 2009). Mouton (1996) defines a focus group as “a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment” (p.26). Semi-structured questions were asked in an interactive group setting where participants were free to talk with other group members (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). In combination with the observations, focus groups were used to gain access to various cultural and social groups and resulted in unexpected issues that were raised and explored further. Focus groups have a high apparent validity since the idea is easy to understand and the results are believable. Focus groups are low in cost, one can obtain results relatively quickly, and they increase the sample size of a report by having several people talking at once (Nachmais & Nachmais, 2008). The focus group discussions with the various learners were scheduled during break or after school to minimise the disruption on the learners and teaching time. The learners participating in the focus group discussions were randomly selected and invited to attend the discussions. Each learner had to sign a permission slip before the discussion could commence. All interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim and coded to assist with the data analysis.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994), using multiple methods to collect data adds to triangulation. Methodological triangulation combines dissimilar methods such as interviews

and observations to study the same phenomenon. In this way the flaws of one method are often the strengths of another. By combining methods, researchers can achieve the best of each, while overcoming their unique deficiencies (Merriam, 1998). Various methods have been combined to collect the data, which adds to the validity and reliability of the study. See example of focus group questions at Appendix G.

3.5.6 Presence of researcher

I acknowledge that my presence in the classroom might have had an effect on the learners, their behaviour and their response to the research questions. However, since the research was conducted in a natural, uncontrived, real world setting with as little intrusiveness as possible, the influence was kept to a minimum. All possible measures were taken to ensure that accurate data was collected like using non-participating observations and making use of different instruments to record and collect the data. I also had quality criteria in place to ensure fair and accurate data like credibility, transferability, dependability and reflexivity. Triangulation and member checking was used to ensure that the data collected was reliable.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is the process of making sense out of one's data and involves organising, accounting for and explaining the data (Cohen et al., 2000). During data analysis, data is consolidated, reduced and to some extent interpreted. The goal of data analysis is to arrive at reasonable conclusions based on a prevalence of the data (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). The amount of interpretation one strives for depends on the purpose of the study as well as the desired end product. As the researcher I needed to decide on the most appropriate data analysis method. The emphasis was on the stated experiences of the participants and on the stated meanings they attached to themselves, to other people, and to their environment (Eysenck, 2004). In this study, this means that the opinions of the principals, teachers and learners regarding diversity and the role of the teacher will add to its quality and reliability.

Various techniques can be used to analyse the data and for the purpose of this study I used grounded theory which is a systematic qualitative research methodology in the social

sciences, emphasizing generation of theory from data in the process of conducting research (Glaser, 1992). It is a research method that operates almost in a reverse fashion from traditional research and at first may appear to be in contradiction to the scientific method. Rather than beginning by researching and developing a hypothesis, the first step is data collection, through a variety of methods. From the data collected, the key points are marked with a series of codes, which are extracted from the text and grouped into similar concepts in order to make them more workable. From these concepts, categories are formed, which are the basis for the creation of a theory (Charmaz, 2006).

According to Goetz and LeCompte (1984), units of information serve as the basis for defining categories and need to adhere to the following two criteria. Firstly, the units must be heuristic, revealing information relevant to the study. Secondly, units must be the smallest piece of information about the study that can stand by itself and, finally, the units must be coded. An inductive approach was followed where the whole interview and observation schedule was entered onto the computer. Even though each case was recorded separately, a cross case analysis was used to compare the findings. Initially, the computer programme *Atlas.ti* was used to code the various interviews, and the code lists generated in the pilot study were slightly changed to correlate with the new instruments (See section 3.7.1). Once the coding process has been completed I found using the programme, to identify and generate themes, time-consuming. I printed out the interviews and other research documents and opted to code the hard copies by hand. Even though valuable time was wasted, I found coding by hand more effective for the manner in which I work.

Coding was an essential link between collecting the data and using the conceptual framework to explain it. Through coding I was able to define what was happening and begin to come to grips with what was emerging. By paying special attention to coding I began to understand the natural setting and the people involved, and by emerging myself in the data I could see different codes emerging. Different coding techniques can be applied to the data: comparative methods was used to compare the data to find differences and similarities, while in vivo codes was used as markers for the participants' speech and meanings (Charmaz, 2006). I was actively involved in the research and by focusing on the coding it allowed me to locate

perspectives I had not thought of before (Charmaz, 2006). Finally, theoretical coding allowed me to identify various relationships that emerged from the focused coding. My conceptual framework provided a useful structure for my data analysis, since culturally responsible teachers were the core of the study. By juxtaposing my findings with my literature review I was able to reinforce my conceptual framework.

3.7 QUALITY CRITERIA OF THE STUDY

A number of quality criteria emerged for the study.

3.7.1 Pilot study

A pilot or feasibility study is a tryout designed to test logistics and gather information prior to a larger study, in order to improve the quality and efficiency. A pilot study can reveal deficiencies in the design of a proposed experiment or procedure and these can then be addressed before time and resources are expended on large scale studies. A pilot study is normally small in comparison with the main experiment and therefore can provide only limited information on the sources and magnitude of variation of response measures (Lancaster, Dodd & Williamson, 2004).

I conducted a pilot study during February 2010 to test all the research instruments. The pilot study was extremely useful since possible barriers and problems were identified and corrected before moving into the field. I used a sample of two teachers, the vice principal and 10 learners. No major problems surfaced during the pilot study, however, I noticed some discrepancies regarding the questions used in the interviews and the observation schedule. The questions were revised to reflect more closely the purpose of the study and to link with my literature review and conceptual framework. The observation schedule was divided into different sections that focused on the standard activities of a lesson, such as preparation, discipline, the role of the teacher, and assessment and quality assurance processes. The interviews and observation schedules were transcribed and coded, using *Atlas.ti*, to identify any emerging themes and to set up the code lists for the main study.

3.7.2 Credibility

Qualitative research requires the use of various strategies to enhance credibility (Maree, 2007), which deals with how one's findings match reality (Merriam, 1998), and if they have captured what is really there. Credibility must be assessed in terms of interpreting the researcher's experience rather than in terms of reality itself. To ensure credibility, the following three methods were used in this study: first, triangulation was used to ensure that the data was reliable; in case studies, this can be done by using multiple sources of data (Yin, 1984). The problem in case studies is to establish meaning rather than location. Interviewers and interviewees bring their own unconscious assumptions with them to the interview. Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) argue that since interviews are humans interacting with humans, it is inevitable that the researcher will have some influence on the interviewee and therefore on the data. Interviewing fares well when compared to other data collection techniques in terms of the validity of the information obtained. There is ample opportunity to probe for clarification and ask questions (Guba & Lincoln, 1981).

Second, the credibility can be assured by member checking. This will include analysing the data and transcribing the interviews. An external person was used to determine if the same conclusions would have been reached given the relevant documents. The participants had an opportunity to read through the report and provide comments and suggestions for improvement. A purpose of qualitative research is to describe or understand the phenomenon of interest from the participant's eyes since the participants are the only ones who can legitimately judge the credibility of the results (Trochim, 2000).

Third and finally, researcher bias is so pervasive because one wishes to confirm one's beliefs, however, in qualitative research researchers acknowledge their bias instead of trying to eliminate it (Monette, Sullivan & De Jong, 2002). The credibility of qualitative research designs depends on the level of correspondence of collective meaning that the researcher and the participants attribute to interpretations and constructs. Natural occurrence of events and characteristic of the participants will yield valid data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). Credibility was thus assured by taking the abovementioned methods into account.

3.7.3 Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree to which the results can be applied to other situations. With case study research, the findings cannot be generalised to the rest of the population, but might shed some light on similar contexts. From a qualitative perspective, transferability is primarily the responsibility of the one doing the generalising. The qualitative researcher can enhance transferability by doing a thorough job of describing the research context and the assumptions that were central to the research (Trochim, 2000). One can improve the generalisability of the findings by providing rich, thick descriptions (Guba & Lincoln, 1985), establishing the typicality of the case (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984), and conducting a multi-case analysis. All of these are present in my study and will add to generalisability.

3.7.4 Dependability

Dependability is the degree to which one's findings can be replicated and if the study was repeated, the same results will emerge. Qualitative research seeks to describe and explain the world as those in the world interpret it (Merriam, 1998). The researcher's position and triangulation can be used to ensure reliability. With the former, the researcher should explain the assumptions and theory behind the study and the latter includes using multiple methods to collect the data. Since triangulation is used to ensure both credibility and dependability, it is not possible to have the one without the other (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). The idea of dependability, on the other hand, emphasises the need for the researcher to account for the ever-changing context within which research occurs. The researcher is responsible for describing the changes that occur in the setting and how these changes affect the way the researcher approached the study (Trochim, 2000).

3.7.5 Reflexivity

The information collected is very personal and subjective and recorded in the participants' own words. Certain subjectivity existed on my part due to my own professional development and engagement with scholarly literature on the relevant topics, however, researching diversity and multicultural classrooms can be complex because of the sensitive nature of the research and as a result precautions were taken not to disrupt the teacher or the learners in their environments. As I was aware of the sensitive nature of the research and the

vulnerability of the learners, all possible measures were taken to minimise the impact on the participants. The participants were informed that the findings would be discussed with my supervisor in a professional manner.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Before research can be conducted, ethical clearance had to be obtained.

3.8.1 Ethical clearance

A designated form, explaining the purpose and the nature of the research, was completed and submitted to both the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee (University of Pretoria) (See Appendix H for ethical certificate from the University) and the GDE. The GDE requires researchers to complete a research request form that contains the details of the proposed study. The research request and a research proposal had to be submitted to the GDE. All the relevant research documents and instruments were submitted and permission was received to continue with the proposed study. (See Appendix I for permission letter from GDE).

3.8.2 Permission from School Governing Body

Permission to conduct the research was obtained from all the parties involved in the research project. I contacted the principal and the SGB of the chosen schools and received their written permission to continue with my research. Afterwards I arranged a meeting with each of the principals and explained the purpose and aims of the research. I also contacted the GDE and the district offices responsible for the schools and obtained permission to conduct the research. Once the Ethics Committee, GDE and SGBs had given me authorisation, letters of informed consent were issued to the parents to inform them about the planned research. (See example of letter to SGB at Appendix J).

3.8.3 Informed consent and voluntary participation

The parents and learners had to be informed about the research in writing (see example of parents' letter at Appendix K and learners' letter at Appendix L). The purpose of the research was explained and all information that might influence the participants' decision to take part

in the research was disclosed. It was made clear that participation in the research was totally voluntary and that the teachers and learners could withdraw at any time, and that their decisions would not result in any consequence or penalty. The learners and parents were guaranteed that participation or non-participation would in no way affect their marks in the subject. I acknowledge the existence of power play in the classroom, but power relationships were not used to influence the participants in any way. I did not expose my participants to undue risk, but rather maximised the benefits of the research and promoted the welfare of the participants.

The risk associated with the research was not great, since the teacher had some authority and power over the learners taking part in the research. The participants were not as vulnerable as other groups, such as orphans and HIV/Aids patients. Since personal benefit and external pressures does exist and could affect the research, I put measures in place to prevent this from happening, such as recording all interviews and using an external person to transcribe the interviews. The risk: benefit ratio was favourable, as the learners, teachers and school may benefit from the findings and recommendations. The participants' only contribution was adding to the body of knowledge, and that in itself was a noble cause.

3.9 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

Chapter Three has focused on how the research was designed, with a combination of constructivism and interpretivism being used as the paradigm for the study. A qualitative research method was preferred to collect the data since case studies allowed the researcher to obtain rich and thick descriptions from the participants, thus adding to the trustworthiness of the study. The sample of schools visited and the way the participants were selected were also discussed. The schools, classes and learners were selected using convenience sampling while the teachers were purposively selected. Different instruments, such as semi-structured interviews, observation schedules and focus group discussions were used to collect the data. The data was analysed using grounded theory since the themes and findings emerged from the data. To ensure the trustworthiness of the study, credibility, transferability and dependability were considered. Ethical considerations and how permission was received from the various

participants were elaborated on. Chapter Four will focus on the findings that emerged during the fieldwork phase of the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS FROM THE FIELDWORK

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings obtained during the fieldwork phase of the research. The data was first transcribed by myself and an independent scribe and printed out. Coding was done by hand, after which the different codes were grouped together into themes, using grounded theory. All the transcripts, i.e. interviews, focus groups, reflections and observations, are available from the researcher while the templates are in the appendices. The sampled schools are divided into separate case studies, each of which is discussed by giving detailed descriptions of the school and general information about the participants, this is done to present the institutional culture of each school and is necessary given that it will inform what and how the teachers ensure quality education. To reiterate, pseudonyms are given to the schools ('West Quay', 'Kings Cross' and 'Stratford') and participants ('Megan', 'Fatima', 'Rina', 'Lisa', 'Beauty' and 'Austin'), to ensure their anonymity, and are used throughout. Section 4.2 will provide more detail on the first case study (West Quay) and the participants (Megan and Fatima), while section 4.3 focuses on the second case study, situated around Kings Cross and the participants (Rina and Lisa). Section 4.4 will introduce Stratford, with Beauty and Austin as the participants. In section 4.5 the main themes are identified from the data and presented utilising the narrative approach.

4.2 WEST QUAY CASE STUDY

The first case study focuses on West Quay, a high school in Pretoria, South Africa, that was established 24 years ago. The school accommodates 1275 learners and employs 80 full time teachers. The next section will provide insight into the school and its functioning, and the two participants, Megan and Fatima.

4.2.1 Background of the school

The following table displays background information on West Quay:

Table 4.1. West Quay background

Information	West Quay
Type of school	Ex model C
Location	Pretoria
District	D4
Medium of instruction	English
Year established	1987
Pre-1994 learner population	White
Post-1994 learner population	White, Black, Coloured and Indian
Number of teachers	80
Number of learners	1275
Average number of learners per class	33
Mode of transport	Parents (cars), bicycles, walking

The vice principal shared the history and the background of the school during her interview, describing West Quay as a well-balanced and good school in the geographic area, if not the best. She said that the school values learners, parents and the partnership they have with them. When learners leave West Quay after Grade 12, they and the management want them to be well-adapted in the workplace and hope that they have acquired all the necessary skills to be successful adults in the community and the world. The area in which the school is located represents people with an average to high income with no visible impact of negative socio-economic issues such as unemployment or HIV. During the integration process West Quay did not have any major incidents and the process was facilitated by the principal and the staff over a period of time. In terms of celebrating the diversity of the learners, the school does not have a set policy, however they uphold various religious rights, such as allowing for religious fasting and prayer days/holidays and festivals. The school does have a culture week in which the various groups do something unique to their culture, e.g., the Indian girls dress up and dance, while the black learners perform a gumboot dance and rap. However, it may be argued

that this merely symbolises the celebratory approach and is not very efficient in conveying the differences of the learners. It was observed that they focus more on the identity of the school, since the teachers and management feel that the learners are part of ‘one large family’. The school offers a wide variety of extramural activities, including equestrianism, cheerleading, rugby, hockey, debating and tennis, to name but a few. Some of the activities are more popular than others but the learners participate across the board. The parents at the school are involved in the activities and help out with sports days and fundraising. They also attend most of the meetings at the school.

According to the vice principal, the role of a teacher in a diverse classroom is to teach and to educate. To her, education is much more than just ‘book knowledge’, and is also to uphold the ethos of the school, to focus on core values and to equip the learners with skills which will augment their lives. The vice principal does not think that the role of the teacher has changed over time, but rather it is the calibre of the learner that has changed, because the parents are more absent from their lives. Furthermore, she feels that teachers do not have to adapt to their teaching strategies, for while it is good to know one’s learners and their background and culture, this will not affect one’s teaching. At West Quay, all the teachers have the necessary qualifications and some are furthering their education by studying various courses. The school even offers study loans and encourages the teachers to be lifelong learners.

The school has in place numerous quality assurance practices, such as the IQMS, whereby the teacher, a peer and the Head of Department (HoD) assess each teacher according to different criteria. In addition, the HoD conducts class visits to see the teacher in practice, and check the learners’ books. Each teacher is held accountable for their subject’s average and the failures in their classes. The post-level 1 teachers who have just qualified and started teaching are monitored regularly by the HoD and given a mentor to support them, while senior teachers are checked on less often because of their experience. West Quay recently had a whole school evaluation by the GDE, in which classes were observed, the files controlled and suggestions given on where the school could improve. My impression of West Quay is that it functions very well, the staff are professional, and there is good communication between the various

levels of management and the teachers. The learners are polite and well-mannered, enjoy the school and are receiving a high standard of education.

4.2.2 Background of Megan and Fatima

The following table presents background knowledge of the participants from West Quay:

Table 4.2. Background of Megan and Fatima

Information	Megan	Fatima
Age	28	47
Gender	Female	Female
Race	White	Indian
Home language	English	English
Tertiary institution	University of Pretoria	Spring View College
Monocultural institution (While they studied)	No	Yes
Degree obtained	Bachelors of Education (BEd)	Secondary education diploma
Graduation year	2005	1983
Teaching experience	5 years	27 years
Subject	Mathematics	Afrikaans

Megan has a good rapport with her learners, making jokes with them, and there is an informal atmosphere in her class. However, her learners can focus and work when they have to. During the interview with Megan's learners one of them made the following comments about her and her class:

...when I go to maths, it's like, it's going to be so much fun, I wonder what we're going to talk about and when you do the work, you actually understand it...(Megan, Learners' focus group 1, 4 May 2010).

Fatima, on the other hand, is firm but friendly. She is consistent in everything she does and has well disciplined learners:

“Ek is ‘n ware heks³” well look I’m being very honest with you, I’m doing this so long that discipline is not an actual problem... I start at the point where they know exactly who I am and what I’m about but you notice we can have fun together now... (Fatima, Pre interview, 18 May 2010)

4.3 KINGS CROSS CASE STUDY

This section focuses on Kings Cross High School, established in 1937 and currently employing 43 teachers with 995 learners. During the school’s 74 years of existence it has overcome a number of challenges to augment its success and good image.

4.3.1 Background of the school

The following table shows background information on Kings Cross.

Table 4.3. Kings Cross background

Information	Kings Cross
Type of school	Ex model C school
Location	Pretoria
District	D3
Medium of instruction	Afrikaans and English
Established	1937
Pre-1994 learner population	White
Post-1994 learner population	White, Black, Coloured and Indian
Number of teachers	43
Number of learners	995
Average learners per class	35
Mode of transport	Private (cars), walking, busses and taxis

The principal at Kings Cross described the school as a fully integrated multicultural high school, located in an area that consists of average to low income households, with socio-economic problems such as poverty and unemployment. The school accommodates learners

³ “I am a real witch”

from three children's homes in the area and subsidises their school fees, with the result that it loses around R850 000 per year.

Since the establishment of Kings Cross, the school has undergone some challenging times but has managed to pull through with the guiding hand of the principal and the teachers. One of these challenging times was in the 1980s, when internal politics damaged the school. The white political party, the "Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging" (AWB),⁴ caused major challenges to the functioning of the school and in the community. The previous principal had been very involved in the politics and caused a split between the parents. Another challenge was in the aftermath of 1994, when the school gradually accepted learners of races other than white, and the integration process started. The principal and the staff were mainly responsible for facilitating the integration process and only had a few minor incidents during that time. One of the challenges was for the teachers to learn a new language, since the majority of the teachers were Afrikaans-speaking. Although the facets of the integration process were unfamiliar to them, they had to adjust their school rules and accommodate learners with differing cultures and religions.

The school does not have any multicultural days but acknowledges the diversity of the learners by allowing for religious fasting and prayer days/holidays and festivals. At Kings Cross the staff encourage the learners to form part of the schools' identity by becoming a 'Crossy'. In the beginning the learners did not attend extramural activities because of transport problems, however over the years the situation has improved and learners now participate in such activities as rugby, cricket, netball, hockey and football. The principal explained that the best school is the one closest to one's house, because the learners can walk and from home and take part in all the activities. However, parent participation at Kings Cross remains unsatisfactory, with no regular attendance at meetings. This leaves the school struggling to get nominations for the SGB elections and so be representative of the learner population.

⁴ A South African political party.

In his early years, the principal's view was that teachers had to teach and parents had to educate, but recently many parents have been absent from their children's lives and the teacher has become the educator (parental figure). The Kings Cross principal believes that the role of teacher has changed dramatically over the past few years in accommodating diverse learners. The responsibility of a multicultural teacher, he believes, is to see all the learners as individuals, to treat them as they are and to be aware of who they are. Teachers quickly pick up when learners are agitated or restless and it might be because of problems at home, fights in the township or striking bus and taxi drivers. According to the principal a multicultural teacher should:

... be able to manage all the various problems while managing the diversity of each learner. Learners just want acceptance and accepting each learner for who they are will help make multicultural education successful... (Kings Cross, Principal interview, 23 March 2010)

The principal feels that teachers do not receive the necessary multicultural training that they need to be effective and efficient teachers. He acknowledges that newly trained teachers are better equipped than the older generation, who are 'stuck in the past' and find it difficult to change. All the teachers at Kings Cross have the necessary qualification to teach and a few of the staff members are furthering their education.

When asked to share his view of quality teaching and learning, the principal said the following:

...quality teaching to me is a teacher with sufficient subject knowledge. Secondly, a teacher must be prepared for a lesson, when they enter the class they must know what to do. Thirdly, a conducive learning environment must be created, some teachers don't even need posters to have an academic atmosphere in the class. The way in which the knowledge is carried over, how the learning is controlled and how they involve the learner in the process is crucial... (Kings Cross, Principal interview, 23 March 2010)

Kings Cross has sufficient systems in place to control the quality of teaching, with the HoDs and subject heads responsible for controlling the quality of work, the planning of the teachers and conducting class visits. In addition, they check the learners' books and moderate question papers before they are written and afterwards, to control the standard of the marking. At the end of a test cycle the averages of the subjects are sent to the HoDs and principal, who look at

the mark distribution and university exception. The principal made it clear that quality assurance as Kings Cross is a continuous and time-consuming process, but confirmed that while the GDE does provide assistance, some of the subject advisors do not know anything, while others are excellent and really assist the teachers. My overall impression of Kings Cross is of a school that has a relaxed atmosphere, with teachers and management complementing each other and striving to provide the best education for their learners.

4.3.2 Background of Rina and Lisa

The following table shows the background knowledge of the participants from Kings Cross:

Table 4.4. Background of Rina and Lisa

Information	Rina	Lisa
Age	48	27
Gender	Female	Female
Race	White	White
Home language	Afrikaans	Afrikaans and English
Tertiary institution	University of Pretoria	University of Pretoria
Monocultural institution (While they studied)	Yes	No
Degree obtained	Bachelors of Science (BSc) and Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)	BA Art, Music and Drama and Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)
Graduation year	1981	2004
Teaching experience	28 years	6 years
Subject	Life Sciences	Arts and Culture Visual Art

Rina is a friendly and approachable teacher who uses her hands to support her vocal communication. Maintaining a steady pace in her class, she is passionate about her subject and mentioned the following in her reflection:

...with science you can bring the outside world into the classroom and experience all the different things, that is what makes life! Science is so real... (Rina, Reflection, 13 May 2010)

Lisa has a more relaxed personality and does not rush her learners to complete a specific task. She is focused on the learners when it comes to planning and presenting a lesson:

...you don't have a choice, you need to accommodate everyone and be in control. Your classes are so diverse with learners of different race, class and gender and background and you need to accommodate everyone. It will determine the lessons you plan, resources you use, the perspective you use to present your lessons. Everyone does not always know what you are talking about. Your higher achievers normally have access to a lot of resources and you can challenge them, but for the learners that are not as fortunate, you can't challenge them that much because they can get unmotivated... (Lisa, Pre interview, 24 May 2010)

Having such dedicated teachers at a school not only contributes to quality education but also to the overall functioning of their departments and the school.

4.4 STRATFORD CASE STUDY

The last case study will focus on Stratford, a High School in Pretoria, South Africa, in existence for the past 49 years. Some of the teachers have been at the school for two decades, and this not only shows their commitment and love for the school and its learners, but also in their passion for education.

4.4.1 Background of the school

The following table provides background information on Stratford:

Table 4.5. Stratford background

Information	Stratford
Type of school	Ex model C school
Location	Pretoria, Centurion
District	D4
Medium of instruction	English
Established	1962
Pre-1994 learner population	White
Post-1994 learner population	White, Black, Coloured and Indian
Number of teachers	60
Number of learners	1150
Average learners per class	32
Mode of transport	Parents (cars), busses and taxis

The newly appointed principal at Stratford explained that their school is one of opportunity, but it also faces many challenges. He added that it is also multicultural with diverse activities, and though not a school of focus it does have pockets of specialisation. Since the principal had only been appointed a year previously he did not have any firsthand experience of the integration process, however some of the important stakeholders, such as the vice principals and SGB chairperson, have shared stories with him about the process. The principal explained that the school had gone through similar changes to the rest of the country and that it had to adjust accordingly.

The school is situated in a low socio-economic area with the community earning very low salaries. Some of the houses are abandoned and other problems such as unemployment and crime also affect the school. The majority of the learners use buses and taxis as a means of transport, while some live close enough to walk.

Before 1994 the teacher and learner demography was 100% white, but more learners from other groups have attended the school, to the point where 99% are black, coloured and Indian learners. However, the majority of the teachers remain white with only a handful of black and

coloured teachers having been appointed. The school has learned a lot through trial and error and most of the teachers have made mental adjustments in recognising it as a multicultural school and making the necessary changes.

According to the principal, most of the learners adjusted quite well in the school. Although they have some racial fights now and then most learners have integrated positively:

...when I became principal I was told by people at the Department [of Education] and other people about the problems that the school had, like racism and non-acceptance, not wanting to change that kind of thing... (Stratford, Principal interview, 26 April 2010)

The previously mentioned racial fights are between the various culture groups in the school, e.g., an isiZulu boy fighting with an isiXhosa boy or a Tshivenda girl fighting with a SeSotho girl. The principal acknowledges that they need to work on tolerance between the various groups. The learners tend to participate across a range of sporting activities, however participation is culturally orientated, for instance, the Indian boys like cricket while the black boys enjoy football and rugby. Participation in the extramural activities is not optimal since learners have problems with transport.

The principal stated that the role of the teacher is to facilitate learning in the classroom:

...the thing is, a teacher has a lot of roles to play. They must also create a positive learning environment in his/her classroom and in the school environment. And in order to create a positive learning environment a teacher must make sure learners are comfortable and safe and where they belong. The teacher needs to fulfil that role, he must make sure that the learner is safe, that he feels he is accepted, and they have a peaceful environment, that is positive to work in... (Stratford, Principal interview, 26 April 2010)

He believed that the roles of teachers had changed over the last decade, saying that some teachers are still using old methods and do not wish to adapt. 'New' teachers are more facilitators who can accept change and allow it to take place, facilitating the process of independent study that previously did not exist. The reason for this change may be attributed to the type of training they have received.

Stratford places high expectations not only on their learners but also the teachers. It has various quality assurance practices in place to ensure all learners receive quality education. Some of the practices include subject meetings, class visits, controls like moderating tests, checking books and homework. The principal trusts that the practices in place contribute to the quality of teaching and learning at Stratford.

4.4.2 Background of Beauty and Austin

The following table provides background knowledge of the participants from Stratford:

Table 4.6. Background of Beauty and Austin

Information	Beauty	Austin
Age	44	38
Gender	Female	Male
Race	Black	Coloured
Home language	English	English
Tertiary institution	Elija Mount College of Higher Education	University of the Western Cape
Monocultural institution (While they studied)	Yes	Yes
Degree obtained	Secondary Teachers Diploma and BCom	BSc Education degree
Graduation year	1988	1995
Teaching experience	17 years	15 years
Subject	Economic and Management Sciences Business Studies	Physical Sciences

Beauty maintains a very formal lesson and might give the appearance of being angry or preoccupied at times. She talks to the learners in an irritated tone and is not approachable. Austin, in contrast, interacts with the learners in an informal way and refers to them as “son”

and “daughter”, treating them like his children. The display of mutual respect is unmistakable as confirmed by the learners themselves:

...he calls us son and daughter, we feel welcome and you can interact with him...
(Austin, Learners’ focus group 2, 30 April 2010)

4.5 EMERGING THEMES FROM THE DATA

During the analyses of qualitative data, the various interviews, observations and focus group discussions had to be transcribed in order to identify the themes to be used in this section. These include the training and experience of the teachers (section 4.5.1); possible adjustment to their teaching style (section 4.5.2); the roles of teachers (section 4.5.3); diversity issues (section 4.5.4); inclusive education and cooperative learning (section 4.5.5); and quality assurance (section 4.5.6).

4.5.1 Training and experience of teachers

The six participants I interviewed all had varied teaching experience and had received their training at different institutions. Megan and Lisa had less than six years of teaching experience each, and graduated from the University of Pretoria after 2000. The University was fully desegregated by that time and is no longer a monocultural institution. Rina had studied at the same university, approximately twenty years earlier, and explained that in the 1980s it only had white students. The teacher training that Megan and Lisa received differed significantly from that of Rina, since multicultural training was not offered in 1981. Consequently, Rina had a much more challenging time adjusting to her diverse learners. Fatima studied at Spring View College and graduated in 1983, and Beauty from Elija Mount College in 1988, while Austin studied at The University of the Western Cape and obtained his degree in 1995. Fatima, Beauty and Austin studied at monocultural institutions and had 27, 17 and 15 years teaching experience respectively. Although they had adequate teaching experience they did not receive any training on how to handle diverse learners. Rina and Lisa, on the other hand, attended university after institutions were integrated and consequently received training that focussed on diversity and worked with a variety of diverse classmates. Megan said the following:

...at varsity, in my third year, I did a project with a black male, I chose him to do the project with because I knew he was brilliant, he is mathematically brilliant and that's why I decided to do my project with him. So I've never had an issue with colour at all ... (Megan, Pre interview, 6 May 2010)

As young teachers who had finished their studies quite recently at multicultural institutions, it might be expected that the training they received with regards to diversity would be quite comprehensive; however, Megan and Lisa commented that their training had not prepared them for the diverse learners in their classroom. Megan said:

...not really, they trained me in the content of my subject. The internship [practical experience obtained at schools] helps... but only when alone in a classroom does it all fit together. You learn from experience and from other teachers... (Megan, Follow-up interview, 10 May 2011)

Rina, Fatima and Beauty studied at monocultural institutions and did not receive adequate training on diversity and its challenges. All three participants completed their studies during 1981, 1983, 1988 respectively and commented that at the time diversity was not important, and receiving training about it was not a priority:

...I grew up on a farm and played with the black children, so that prepared me for the multicultural side... However, for the diverse learners, intellectually diverse, it comes with experience... (Rina, Follow-up interview, 19 May 2011)

...I trained 27 years ago when there was no need for this. However, over the years one just adjusts and adapts to the changes... (Fatima, Follow-up interview, 10 May 2011)

...teaching practicals could only be done at African schools, because of politics back then, so my training was limited to one race of learners... (Beauty, Follow-up interview, 23 May 2010)

From the participants comments' it is evident that the training they received, whether at monocultural or multicultural institutions, did not aid them in their diverse classrooms. The only commonality from their comments is that it comes with experience. Rina's learners made an insightful comment:

...some teachers have the knowledge, but they just don't know how to convey it, they can't teach, they are not suppose to be teachers and other teachers are just not experienced enough... (Rina, Learners' focus group 1, 13 May 2010)

This leads to the next theme, of how the teachers had to adapt their teaching style over the years to meet the needs of their diverse learners.

4.5.2 Adjustment to teaching styles

Five of the six participants interviewed confirmed that they had to make an adjustment to their teaching style to accommodate diverse learners. Megan, the Mathematics teacher, explained:

...some learners struggle with the concept of 'spatial', I have to think out of the box to get it across... (Megan, Pre interview, 6 May 2010)

When one of Megan's colleagues had to explain 'buoyancy' to her class she wished to use the example of a boat floating on water, but realised that her learners had never seen a boat so she decided to use a bucket and a cork to explain it. By adjusting her teaching style to meet the needs of her diverse learners she was thus able to effectively carry over the required knowledge, regardless of their religion and culture. Rina teaches Science to Grade 11 learners and realised that she had to change the examples she used when explaining genetics. She added:

...I used to use examples like blond hair and blue eyes, until I realised I cannot anymore because they don't have blond hair and blue eyes... (Rina, Pre interview, 11 May 2010)

The greatest adjustment that Lisa had to make was to use both English and Afrikaans in her lessons. She had to create interactive lessons to keep the diverse learners interested in the subject:

...I do this by combining different sources and translating it... contemporary examples are important... you have to think what they will relate to... (Lisa, Pre interview, 24 May 2010)

Beauty had immediately to adjust her teaching style since her experience at Stratford was very different from her previous school. She also had to adjust to the language problem and become confident and fluent in English as her medium of instruction. The only participant who had not changed his teaching style was Austin, whose only change of any kind was to improving his English accent. Some of the participants found it easier than others to change and adapt their teaching styles, and when asked how they managed the change Megan said that is depended on one's background and culture. Fatima's years of experience assisted her,

while Rina said it depended on one’s personality and attitude towards the learners and one’s profession.

4.5.3 Roles of a teacher

Fatima and Lisa both answered that facilitating learning was their main role as teachers:

... it’s to facilitate learning... (Fatima, Pre interview, 18 May 2010) and ... to facilitate, to equip... (Lisa, Pre interview, 24 May 2010)

Megan and Beauty had similar answers in the sense that their main role was to impart education and to teach. Austin’s main role is to empower his learners while Rina found it hard to adjust to her new role since seeing learners of different races socialising was strange. She wished to set a good example to her learners and consequently had to change accordingly. The learners all had similar answers to questions on the main role of the teacher. The following table is a summary of their responses:

Table 4.7. Main roles of teachers as identified by the learners

		Participants					
		Megan	Fatima	Rina	Lisa	Beauty	Austin
Main role	To teach us	To explain all the work	To teach us	To teach	To teach	To teach	
	To make us understand	To improve our marks	To educate us	To supply information	To interact	To educate	
	To educate us		To give us knowledge	To help us with life skills	To maintain discipline	To guide us	
			To make us understand	To preach	Must be willing to help	To be our parents	

Five of the six participants’ learners said that the main role of a teacher is to teach. When I asked them to explain ‘teaching’ they replied:

...teaching is like, general stuff, she can teach you like manners or anything but education is just like set out by the work. Okay, you have to do this and this on this day and that is education, that is life... (Megan, Learners' focus group 2, 6 May 2010)

From the learners' answers it is clear that they had a misperception about teaching and learning.

Megan added that the other roles she must fulfil on a daily basis are that of counsellor (even though she received no formal training); a mother figure who is compassionate; and a role model who sets good examples. Fatima also fulfils the role of a mother and in the process would like to develop her learners holistically and teach them life lessons. Maintaining good discipline and being consistent are some of the other roles that Rina said play a role in her diverse classroom, while Lisa acts as mediator to make sure that effective learning takes place and ensures her learners achieve something. Lisa, an Arts and Culture teacher, said:

...there is no way learning about dancing in a theoretical way, they have to do it practically... (Lisa, Pre interview, 24 May 2010)

Beauty also played the role of mentor, role model, educator and advisor, whereas Austin wanted his learners to think for themselves. From the observations it was clear that all the participants fulfilled the role of learning mediator/facilitator, which was also the role that was used the most. The two participants who stood out the most in this regard were Lisa and Austin, with Lisa allowing her learners to struggle first and then assisting, whereas Austin would prompt them in such a way that they answered the questions themselves. Another role that was used excessively was that of learning area specialist. Four of the six participants had excellent subject knowledge and could assist their learners and ensure that quality teaching and learning was taking place. Rina, the Science teacher, used the subject-specific terminology in a clear and consistent way. Austin, also a Science teacher, used his subject knowledge to explain difficult concepts in such a way that the learners can understand. The third role that the participants played was that of interpreter and designer of learning programmes. Most had to compile their own notes, activities, tests, portfolios and additional handouts. When asked why they did this they explained that there were so many textbooks on the market, and a single one did not cover the content sufficiently. The teacher then needed to

combine the work from three to four textbooks and give it to the learners. One of Austin’s learners commented:

... there is a mistake in this textbook!... these textbooks are a waste of time...
(Austin, Observation 2, 30 April 2010)

The fourth role commonly played by the participants was that of assessor. The teachers had regularly to mark the learners’ books, portfolio assignments, class tests and term tests. During the lessons they would ask many questions and wait for the learners to answer, and this was used to assess the learners in an informal way. The roles of leader, administrator and manager, scholar, researcher, lifelong learner, community member, citizen, and pastoral guide were not identified during the observations.

The learners also mentioned other roles that their teachers need to fulfil, shown in the table below:

Table 4.8. Other roles of teachers as identified by the learners

		Participants					
		Megan	Fatima	Rina	Lisa	Beauty	Austin
Other roles	To talk to us about stuff	To value you as a person	Maintain discipline	Keep us disciplined	To help with problems	To watch what they say	
	To help us	To respect each other’s views	Not be a parent	Settle us down	To treat us equal	To treat everyone the same	
	To know us personally				To be fair	To make learning a bit fun	

Megan’s learners made a comment about the teacher having to know them personally, and when I asked them about this, they said:

...it is nice having a relationship with the teacher, almost like a friend. Someone you can communicate with, other than 'subject-ish' things... (Megan, Learners' focus group 2, 6 May 2010)

...that is nice, because most teachers don't really care... (Megan, Learners' focus group 1, 4 May 2010)

Another unexpected comment was expressed by Rina's learners, who said she should not play the role of a parent. When I prompted them for an explanation they merely replied:

...we don't expect that from her... (Rina, Learners' focus group 1, 13 May 2010)

One of Lisa's learners asked me if I want her honest opinion of what teachers do, we had the following discussion:

Interviewer: Yes, please.

Learner: To make us suffer!

Interviewer: Can you give me an example?

Learner: They give us too much homework, homework on weekends.... (Lisa, Learners' focus group 1, 24 May 2010)

This was quite an interesting comment and will be analysed and discussed in the next chapter. Beauty and Austin's learners referred to roles that focus on equality and fairness, indicating that diverse learners expect their teachers to fulfil diverse roles.

The roles mentioned by the participants were complex and inter-related, and beg the question as to how they knew which one to play. In Megan's view:

...it changes depending on the time of the year and influences in the school. A teacher must be an educator, a councillor, a parent and any other number of people. It depends on the child's needs... (Megan, Follow-up interview, 10 May 2011)

Fatima commented that:

...as an educator, one always needs to facilitate and fulfil roles according to the needs of the learners... (Fatima, Follow-up interview, 10 May 2011)

On the other hand Rina had the following to say:

...through experience, as things change one must attend workshops to keep up with the latest trend and fulfil your role... (Rina, Follow-up interview, 19 May 2011)

The beliefs and identities of teachers, as mentioned in Chapter Two, shape and add to the role of the teacher. When asked if their beliefs and identity influence their role in any way Megan responded:

...I am myself in class. I will refer to my religious beliefs but will not ever impose them. I often say God is a mathematician...I feel being confident and allowing learners to see that produces two things...The learners want to be confident in themselves and having confidence in my ability as a teacher... (Megan, Follow-up interview, 10 May 2011)

Fatima said that her beliefs and identity did influence her role, especially when the learners in the literature class queried her faiths and beliefs. Even though they asked, they did not do so in an intimidating way. When teaching evolution, Rina said, it was very important to stay neutral at all times and to keep the discussion focused.

The study focuses on the role of the teacher in a class of diverse learners and hence the importance of the following theme and findings.

4.5.4 Diversity

When collecting the data, the topic surrounding diversity was very important, and the participants were very helpful in providing valuable information. As the main theme, diversity will be divided into five subsections, as follows.

4.5.4.1 Definition of diversity

Asked to define diversity, the participants all had a similar response: “different”. Megan explained it as the different cultures and abilities within a school, adding that if a school had a range of cultures, religions and interests it was a diverse school. Fatima answered that diversity was about different cultures in a class and that a teacher must ensure that no culture feels intimidated, which could be done by creating a conducive learning environment. For Rina, diversity went hand-in-hand with multicultural education and was about different races

and cultures. Beauty also believed that diversity was about differences in cultures, traditions, races and languages, while Austin had the same opinion, and added:

...diversity meaning different...different people, different beliefs, different cultures... (Austin, Pre interview, 14 May 2010)

4.5.4.2 Diversity and the influence it has on the teacher's role

Three of the six participants said that the diversity of the learners influenced their role as a teacher. Megan said that one needed to have respect for the different customs and traditions of the learners:

...I do think that you have to speak differently to different cultures and realise that your teaching styles have to meet all of that in one classroom and that your jokes and comments, that kind of stuff cannot be offensive to anyone... (Megan, Pre interview, 6 May 2010)

Fatima said that the diversity of her learners complimented her role as a teacher. She commented that one should allow the learners to be who they want to be, without judging them. Beauty and Austin both agreed that their roles were not influenced by the diversity of their learners. Beauty felt that the role she played applies to all the learners, while Austin did not wish to focus on the differences of his learners. Lisa made a personal confession:

...it is a huge challenge for you as a teacher, and for me as a white female to realise where a child comes from, what his/her circumstances are and to take that into consideration... (Lisa, Pre interview, 24 May 2011)

Rina was the only participant to say:

...the diversity of your learners is not suppose[d] to influence your role... (Rina, Pre interview, 11 May 2011)

4.5.4.3 Culturally responsible teacher

All of the participants I interviewed had a misperception about what it meant being a culturally responsible teacher. As argued in Chapter Two, this involves embracing six principles, namely: validity, comprehensiveness, multi-dimensionality, empowerment, transformation and emancipation (Gay, 2000). When I observed the participants I was able to identify which of the six principles were being drawn on by the participants. The following table illustrates which culturally responsive principles were used by each of the participants:

Table 4.9. Culturally responsive principles utilized by the teacher participants

		Participants					
		Megan	Fatima	Rina	Lisa	Beauty	Austin
Culturally responsive principle	Validity		✓				✓
	Comprehensiveness	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
	Multi-dimensionality	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Empowerment	✓					
	Transformation		✓		✓		✓
	Emancipation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

As evident from the table, not one of the participants fulfilled all six principles, while those used by all the participants were *multi-dimensionality* and *emancipation*. During the interviews, Megan said she *tries* to be culturally responsible while Fatima and Rina *think* they are culturally responsible. Fatima respects all the cultures and has the opinion that religion is a choice one makes, while culture is what one is brought up with. Rina commented that she was part of a group that showcased African cultures to exchange students and promote being a culturally responsible teacher in that way. Lisa was the only one to say that she *ought* to be, since she was teaching it (Arts and Culture). Beauty and Austin also felt that they were culturally responsible teachers, even though Beauty did not understand the question and Austin provided the following motivation:

...I try and encourage unity... I don't focus on colour and lose the plot... I try and build by not labelling people... (Austin, Pre interview, 14 May 2010)

When the learners had to comment on how culturally responsible they thought their teachers were, only one teacher's learners commented that she was not culturally responsible. This may be qualified by recognising the learners did not understand what a culturally responsible teacher meant. Therefore, I first had to explain the concept, after which they had to substantiate their answers. Megan's learners said:

...she is very unbiased... (Megan, Learners' focus group 2, 6 May 2010)

Rina's learners said that she was part of the Global Youth Forum and that she was a culturally responsible teacher because:

...she listens to people's arguments, even if they are wrong, she thinks logically and bases what she says on the argument, not on the person. She does not discriminate... (Rina, Learners' focus group 2, 13 May 2010)

Lisa's learners said:

...she is not a racist, she respects the cultures in the class and she does not have any favourites... (Lisa, Learners' focus group 2, 17 May 2010)

As is evident from the learners' comments, they did not fully understand the concept. This will be analysed and discussed in the next chapter.

4.5.4.4 Diversity as a resource

Four of the participants said that they used the diversity of their learners as a resource. Megan used the following example to get across the point:

...I was explaining similar terms in Maths and you know how X squared and X is not the same and I said to them, alright look at these two graphs - they're best friends and one is Indian and one is white. I said, they're both graphs, they're both friends but they're different- the one is Indian and the one is white and it's like X squared and X. They're both X but one is squared and one is not... (Megan, Pre interview, 6 May 2010)

Rina and Lisa found the diversity of their learners helpful since it was easier using it as a resource in subjects like Science and Arts and Culture. In Science, when the learners had discussions about abortion, circumcision, traditional medicine, sangomas and albinos, Rina was fascinated by the views and comments of learners from different cultures and religious groups. Lisa said that the diverse learners definitely influenced her role since the practical side of Arts and Culture allowed them to incorporate their own culture and background into something like a dance. During her reflection, Lisa mentioned the following about the learners' practical dances and behaviour:

...I would have liked them to realise that when someone is on stage, you need to respect them, but that has a lot to do with their culture because they were not brought up going to theatres and the ballet, so they have a disadvantage... (Lisa, Reflection, 24 May 2010)

Fatima added that:

...the learners and I share cultures and traditions especially in literature and poetry... we do this to eliminate wrong ideas that can be created by ignorance... the manner of steering the discussion should lead to sharing and not become a debate... (Fatima, Follow-up interview, 10 May 2011)

Beauty was very careful and sensitive when using the diversity of her learners as a resource since it might upset some sensitive learners. Austin made an unexpected comment:

...multicultural, I hate that word within a class context because I would like to view all my learners as just learners... (Austin, Pre interview, 14 May 2010)

4.5.4.5 Diversity and its challenges

Being a teacher in the current cultural and political climate is not an easy task, and when one adds a diverse class to the scenario more challenges present themselves. Consequently it is the responsibility of the teacher to manage these challenges in an effective and efficient way. When I posed the question to the participants on the challenges of teaching diverse learners, Megan had the following to say:

...you have to be more than one person at a time... you must be able to teach the slower learners while still challenging the bright learners... you must be able to discipline them without offending other learners... some learners do not react well to certain forms of discipline... (Megan, Follow-up interview, 10 May 2011)

Rina had a similar response to that of Megan (above):

...one challenge is to meet the standards of the intellectually challenged learners as well as the learners who are working for ninety percent ... you must use examples in genetics that are applicable to all races... (Rina, Follow-up interview, 19 May 2011)

Fatima had a different response to the question, adding that:

...one needs to be sensitive to the different cultures and beliefs... you must build trust in your learning environment so that sensitive issues can be dealt with in the right spirit and attitude... (Fatima, Follow-up interview, 10 May 2011)

Beauty shared Fatima's approach:

...the biggest challenge is accommodating all the different cultures... (Beauty, Follow-up interview, 23 May 2011)

I was surprised by the feedback I obtained from my participants with regard to diversity, in particular that only two claimed to have heard about inclusive education and cooperative learning, and this in spite of most of the literature commenting on effectiveness when dealing with diverse learners.

4.5.5 Inclusive education and cooperative learning

Inclusive education and cooperative learning were identified in both local and international literature as an effective approach when dealing with diverse learners. As most of the participants had not received adequate diversity training, this section will introduce some approaches that teachers could apply when teaching diverse learners.

Megan and Fatima were the only participants who could provide some insight into these teaching strategies used in diverse classrooms, while Rina, Lisa, Beauty and Austin could not tell me what inclusive education or cooperative learning meant. However, the four had heard of the strategies, saying that both could be used in a diverse classroom and that they would use them. Megan felt that there was a fine line between inclusive education and being Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) compliant:

...learners do not want to be chosen because of their colour but because of their merit... we treat learners differently because we feel we have to, and it's wrong...
(Megan, Pre interview, 6 May 2010)

Megan would definitely use both strategies in her classroom and believed that if one did not use the strategies one could not teach in a multicultural classroom. She felt that if one had no interest in children of different talents one would not be able to teach in a multicultural environment. Fatima regarded inclusive education as allowing every learner in the class to bring what he/she could bring into that lesson, without the teacher intimidating them. She correctly explained cooperative learning as working together in groups that consist of a representative from each culture. Fatima would also use both strategies since they could be incorporated in Afrikaans quite easily.

From the observations of Megan, Fatima, Beauty and Austin it was clear that not all the participants used inclusive education and cooperative learning. The only two participants who successfully used cooperative learning were Rina and Lisa. Afterwards, the participants

reflected on their lessons and commented that the group work and cooperative learning were very effective. Austin and Rina were the only participants who relied on self-discovery and constructivism. Austin also admitted that, during 2010, they had used the shortest route to get the work done. Likewise, Fatima said that:

...with the senior learners, you have so many time constraints, you are just chasing syllabus... (Fatima, Reflection, 17 May 2010)

The learners also picked up that the teachers were rushing to get finished. Rina's learners said:

...the pace is hectic this term because of the [football] World Cup... (Rina, Learners' focus group 2, 13 May 2010)

The football tournament had a noticeable impact, not just on the pace of teaching and the learners' behaviour, but also on the quality of the education. Feedback and reflection is an important part of assessing where the learners are and what they still need to focus on, hence Austin's learners mentioned the following:

...the pace is too quick this year because of the World Cup... there is not enough time for feedback and to reflect... (Austin, Learners' focus group 2, 30 April 2010)

4.5.6 Quality assurance

When asked about quality education, Megan replied:

...the challenge in quality education is that it is based on so many external factors that you have no control over...(Megan, Pre interview, 6 May 2010)

To Fatima, quality education meant:

...offering the best, to not the class as a whole, but to each individual learner... (Fatima, Pre interview, 18 May 2010)

Megan added that quality assurance was a teachers' ability to teach a subject and one with whom he or she is comfortable. She continued to explain that the teacher must be qualified, have the necessary experience, build a relationship with the learners and be able to manage discipline in the classroom. Megan was teaching in an attractive pink classroom, decorated with flowers, feathers, pictures, posters and motivational sayings. This was a reflection of her

personality and may have contributed to creating a positive learning environment in which quality teaching and learning could take place, as indicated by Megan's learners:

...it is nice to learn in a relaxed environment ... (Megan, Learners' focus group 2, 6 May 2010)

...and her classroom also adds to the vibe... (Megan, Learners' focus group 1, 4 May 2010)

For Fatima, quality education was about target-setting; differentiation; knowing one's learners; giving extra work; being committed; liking what one is doing; and reinforcing past knowledge. Fatima did not have her own classroom but moved around using available rooms for her lessons. My thought during the data collection was how this would influence the quality of the teaching and learning and whether it would require additional planning and organisation. This issue will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Rina explained that quality entailed being prepared, being a master in one's subject, being honest, organised, and making an extra effort to ensure that a better quality of teaching is delivered. Rina's use of the media centre as her classroom, with access to books, computers and the Internet, assisted her greatly with quality assurance, since the learners could use these resources. Lisa, meanwhile, saw quality education as using the latest technology and social networking to connect to the learners. She said that popular sites such as *FaceBook*, *Twitter* and *My Space* could be used to communicate with the learners. Furthermore, she thought that practical work, having frameworks and rules in place, and equipping learners for the future, constituted quality education. Likewise, Beauty commented that:

...quality education is being well prepared, making the lessons interesting for the learners, drawing their attention, doing regular assessments, proving constructive feedback to learners and working on a daily basis... (Beauty, Pre interview, 14 May 2010)

Finally Austin said that quality education was:

...ideally speaking now... what a learner really needs from you as a teacher... whenever he/she walks out of your class and can say, today I learned something... and it does not necessarily have to be subject orientated... (Austin, Pre interview, 14 May 2010)

Various practices were in place to ensure that quality education took place. Those in place at West Quay, and being used by Megan and Fatima, included knowing the learners; being prepared at all times; using trial-and-error to improve lessons; reflecting and realising one's faults and being self-critical; being honest and flexible; and changing the lesson to fit with the needs of the learners or the school. Other general practices included moderation, peer teaching and mentoring, IQMS, parental involvement and learner-teacher evaluation. Additionally, Megan used a unique quality assurance process, namely making funny sounds to get the learners attention instead of screaming and shouting:

...like I'll say, hint-hint, nudge-nudge... I make up words like neef-neef and shimmer-shimmer... (Megan, Pre interview, 6 May 2010)

Megan also offered extra classes for the learners if they did not understand, and showed them tricks or cheats in Mathematics that the learners could use. When I asked the learners about their teacher they had the following to said:

...I use to go to extra classes but with this teacher, I've started noticing you don't need extra classes... (Megan, Learners' focus group 1, 4 May 2010)

...she goes the extra mile and is willing to help... (Megan, Learners' focus group 1, 4 May 2010)

...she often gives us like little tricks and stuff we can use with maths, stuff you wouldn't think of... (Megan, Learners' focus group 1, 4 May 2010)

...she shows you things that other teachers won't show you. Different methods you can actually understand. She gives you ways around it, to get it... (Megan, Learners' focus group 2, 4 May 2010)

Fatima also did extra work that enabled her learners to perform well and achieve their goals, such as making different worksheets that covered different sections of the work. She then handed it out to any learner who would like to do extra work. During the focus group interview the learners made the following comments:

...she will make 3 to 4 worksheets to help us understand... (Fatima, Learners' focus group 1, 15 May 2010)

...if you do not understand you can go to her... she will make you a worksheet, like especially for you... (Fatima, Learners' focus group 1, 15 May 2010)

...she prepares extra worksheets, she wants to help us and she wants us to pass...
(Fatima, Learners' focus group 1, 15 May 2010)

At Kings Cross, Rina and Lisa utilised the following quality assurance practices: Monitoring by HoDs; appointing subject heads to ease the workload; moderation at school and cluster level; good communication; extra classes; making contact with parents; being consistent with deadlines; and giving extended opportunities. Rina has 28 years of teaching experience and the learners knew they were receiving quality education, reflected in the following comments:

...she knows what she is talking about... (Rina, Learners' focus group 1, 13 May 2010)

...this teacher is one of the best teachers I have had...(Rina, Learners' focus group 2, 13 May 2010)

Rina also likes using question and answer sessions that are learner-orientated. At Stratford, Beauty and Austin make use of the following practices: creative resources; good time management; standardization of tasks; reviewing of results; moderation of tests; and class visits by HODs. The wide variety of quality assurance practices ensured that teachers can choose those that best suit their teaching style, standards set by the school and the diversity of their learners. Austin's learners had great respect for him and appreciated the effort he put in:

...he has passion for teaching, you can see it... (Austin, Learners' focus group 2, 30 April 2010)

...I feel he is an excellent teacher; he is very good, he knows what he is doing...
(Austin, Learners' focus group 1, 29 April 2010)

...he tries to make it a bit fun for us and he uses examples of everyday life so that we can understand... (Austin, Learners' focus group 1, 29 April 2010)

...he is great, he makes it relevant... (Austin, Learners' focus group 1, 29 April 2010)

Many learners brought up the topic of homework, tests and portfolios. Rina's learner made the following statement about homework:

...homework is the first step to you doing well in the exams, self discipline is very important... (Rina, Learners' focus group 2, 13 May 2010)

Rina's learners also felt that teachers had a responsibility to check homework, with another learner saying:

...if teachers don't check homework, their subject moves down the priority list. If I have Science and Maths homework and I know the Maths teacher doesn't check, I would rather do my Science work and not get into trouble... (Rina, Learners' focus group 2, 13 May 2010)

Tests and portfolios are other methods that can be used to assess learners' knowledge and determine whether or not quality education took place. The learners in Rina's class at Kings Cross made the following comments:

...portfolio work does not show any natural knowledge, it just takes a little commitment. I'm not good at portfolios, I don't have the time for that... (Rina, Learners' focus group 2, 13 May 2010)

...I actually prefer tests to portfolio work, you sit for an hour or two and its tests your knowledge, where any buffoon can do well in a portfolio assignment, if they just put in a little effort... (Rina, Learners' focus group 2, 13 May 2010)

...tests are a better way to test your knowledge and your performance... (Rina, Learners' focus group 2, 13 May 2010)

...tests that come in intervals are good. Like you learn a chapter and then you write a test, so by the time the exam comes, you know what you don't know and what you need to work on... (Rina, Learners' focus group 2, 13 May 2010)

As is evident from the learners' comments, tests have many more advantages than portfolios. Another factor that assists in ensuring quality teaching and learning takes place is for teachers to know their learners. From the observations I noticed that the participants knew their learners and used their names to communicate with them, get their attention and also manage the discipline. Differentiating tasks and tests is another way to make sure one meets the needs of all the learners. Four of the six participants used this technique and the results substantiate claims for their effectiveness.

To summarise, the various themes that emerged from the fieldwork have both similarities to and differences from the findings in both local and international literature. Even though the findings cannot be generalised to the rest of the population, it will allow fellow teachers and scholars the opportunity to understand this phenomenon and provide an opportunity for future research. The schools in the case studies were chosen to reflect the majority of schools in South Africa with regards to their teacher and learner population. The six main themes, i.e., the training and experience of the teachers; adjustment to their teaching style; the roles of teachers; diversity issues; inclusive education and cooperative learning; and quality assurance, will be analysed and discussed in the next chapter, with special reference to ways in which they confirm or refute the literature.

4.6 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter has provided details regarding the schools and participants, and allowed the reader to form a perception of the participants through their voices and stories. During this chapter, significant input was obtained from Megan and her learners, Fatima and her learners, Rina and her learners and Austin's learners. Less relevant information was obtained from Austin, Beauty and Lisa. During the follow-up interviews some of the participants were not available and valuable information could not be gained. The following highlights were found during this process: First, the training the teachers had received did not assist them in their diverse classrooms. Second, certain adjustments must be made to a teachers' teaching style, depending on the teachers' perception, beliefs, identity and experience. Third, the roles of teachers are varied and numerous, the most important being that of facilitator. Fourth, diversity of the learners has an influence on the teachers' role and determines which is needed when. Teaching a class of diverse learners requires being culturally responsible and making an extra effort to use the diversity of the learners as a resource. Various challenges face teachers on a daily basis, and if they are aware of these then precautions can be taken to avoid them influencing the quality of teaching and learning. Fifth, inclusive education and cooperative learning have been proven to be the best approach to use for teachers in diverse classrooms. Finally, quality assurance is taken very seriously at all three schools, and it

depends on the principal, HoDs and teachers as to how serious, rigorous and time consuming the process is going to be.

The highlighted themes, in conjunction with the literature review and conceptual framework will be valuable tools in analysing the data in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to provide insight into the findings that emerged from the fieldwork while reflecting on the literature. Section 5.2 will identify similarities between the findings and the literature and section 5.3 the differences. Section 5.4 will highlight the silences found and suggest a way forward. Section 5.5 will summarise the findings from the study and a conclusion will be drawn.

5.2 ECHOING THE LITERATURE

This section will focus on the similarities that were identified between the literature and the findings of this study. The similarities are as follows: the importance of diversity training (5.2.1); teachers' perceptions, beliefs and identities versus learners' needs (5.2.2); cooperative learning (5.2.3); the role of the teacher (5.2.4); and diversity as a resource (5.2.5). Many similarities were found between the findings in the literature and the findings of my research study, namely: quality assurance (5.2.6); the definition of diversity (5.2.7); assimilation and the colour-blind approach (5.2.8); the challenges of diversity (5.2.9); and, finally, lifelong learning (5.2.10).

5.2.1 Importance of diversity training

From the findings and the comments of the participants the supposition can be made that receiving adequate diversity training at university or college is fundamental. Lisa said that the training she received at university was very important since it allowed her to provide quality education to her diverse learners (just how effective the training is will be discussed below). The original presumption was that the training pre-service teachers received would influence

their role as teachers; however, this assumption was limited and not thought through. From the findings and literature it is clear that the training teachers receive, whether monocultural or multicultural, does not have an influence on their role as teachers but merely adds to their body of knowledge. This body of knowledge can be used in various situations inside and outside of class to assist the teacher in solving problems and providing the best education possible. The comment was made by Fatima, Rina, Beauty and Austin that there was no need for diversity education in the apartheid era since schools were segregated, therefore no diversity training or courses were offered to the pre-service teachers. Times have changed since then and teachers who were trained during the apartheid years are now faced with a diverse classroom in desegregated schools. The only advantage that Megan and Lisa have is that they attended some diversity courses and have some knowledge of diversity; however, according to them, the training was insufficient and did not equip them for their diverse classrooms.

The literature emphasises the following points with regards to training of teachers: Various scholars posit that the core of teacher training should be diversity education (Banks, 1995; Moore & Reeves-Kazelskis, 1992; Sleeter, 1991; Taylor, 2010). When teacher training institutions focus more on culturally responsive pedagogy and make the pre-service teachers aware of the six principles of culturally responsive teachers (Biesta, 2004; Cochran-Smith, 2001; Gay, 2000) they will gain insight into this remarkable field. Teachers will be enthusiastic about the influence it will have, not only on their role as teachers but also in ensuring quality education. Some teachers are excited about the prospect of change and, when dealt with proactively, they could benefit from diversity education and a culturally responsive pedagogy.

Smith (2004) believes that establishing sound pedagogy, rooted in cultural understandings of the learners is critical given that racial, cultural and linguistic integration has the potential to increase academic success for all learners. Richards et al. (2007) state that a culturally responsive pedagogy will facilitate and support the achievement of all learners. When institutions broaden the pre-service teachers' limited view on diversity (Silverman, 2010) and prepare them to work with learners from different backgrounds (Keengwe, 2010; Ladson-

Billings, 2001) their experiences will remain positive and not make them negative about diversity (Cho & De Castro-Ambrosetti, 2005; Gagliardi, 1994), thus rendering their training effective.

5.2.2 Teachers' perceptions, beliefs and identities versus learners' needs

Another similarity found between the literature and the findings is that the perceptions, beliefs and identities of teachers are important, even though they do not affect their roles. Megan said that she did not impose her beliefs on the learners, while Fatima agreed with the literature in the sense that her beliefs and her identity did not influence her role in the class. Meier (2005) stated that “the current integration of South African schools calls for teachers to actively take stock of their perceptions of learners from diverse backgrounds and develop the attitudes, knowledge, and skills that will equip them to teach effectively in culturally diverse classrooms” (p.1). If teachers are unable to change any negative perceptions they might have about a culture group or a specific learner, it would be detrimental to their learners' achievements. Teacher education programmes should instead be aimed at changing possible negative perceptions towards learners from diverse groups, and developing a positive outlook, a realization that could assist teachers in making the appropriate change to their perceptions and beliefs and consequently their teaching style (Meier et al., 1999).

Teachers' beliefs about how diverse learners learn and the expectations of different racial groups may influence the way they plan and present their lessons (Sadker et al., 2008), but not their roles in general. Negative expectations could prevent teachers from making an extra effort and lead to their planning and presenting lessons that are dull and boring for learners. Rina mentioned that she “goes the extra mile” for her learners to ensure they understand the work and achieve good results. Teachers with lower goals for their learners could produce lower achievements (Burt et al., 2009). Bandura (1986) and Dewey (1933) inferred that beliefs were the most significant predictors of the decisions that individuals make throughout their lives, so teachers must make the right decision and adapt their teaching style. Von Wright (1997) discussed the changing expectations in teachers' beliefs about their role as teachers, which could lead to a shift in thinking about teaching and learning as a whole. Teachers need to decide what role they shall play in the classroom then change their teaching

style accordingly. The subject requirements, learners' needs and environment could require different roles to be fulfilled each day, so teachers should be flexible and adapt as necessary. They must ensure that their perceptions, beliefs and identity do not disadvantage their learners in any way.

5.2.3 Cooperative learning

The claim that cooperative learning is an effective approach when dealing with diverse learners was supported by the participants as well as the literature. Cooperative learning helps learners from majority and minority ethnic groups learn how to work with each other in a class (Johnson & Johnson, 1972; Slavin, 1980). Megan said that she would not be able to teach in a multicultural setting without using cooperative learning, while Fatima commented that the two strategies could easily be used in Afrikaans to make the learning process more effective. Beauty said that feedback and reflection should be used in conjunction with the two strategies, in order to record the things that worked well and determine what to avoid in the future. Rina and Lisa were the only two participants who organised their learners into groups when doing practicals. This was a significant observation and confirmed the argument that cooperative learning is the correct strategy to use in such a situation. In order to educate the blend of different ethnic cultures, cooperative learning lends itself particularly well to teaching learners with differing abilities and needs in the same classroom (Glasgow et al., 2006). As was evident from the research, teaching a diverse classroom is not an easy task, but incorporating cooperative learning into lessons may make the task seem less daunting.

5.2.4 The role of teachers

The role of the teacher is an integral part of this study and the findings suggest that it is not possible to fulfil all the prescribed NSE (National Education Policy Act, 1996) roles at once. The participants also shared their belief that it is only possible to focus on one or two roles at a time, consequently it is important that they alternate between the various roles and make sure they utilise all of them on a regular basis. The more teachers employ the different roles the easier it becomes to use them, and teachers will be able to switch between them more naturally. The principal of culturally responsible, i.e., *multi-dimensional* teaching (Gay, 2000), compliments the role of the teacher as a whole, since being multi-dimensional requires

the teacher to focus on the curriculum and learning content, create a constructive learning environment, foster learner-teacher interactions and manage various assessments.

The roles of learning mediator (facilitator), subject area specialist, designer of learning programmes, manager, administrator, leader and assessor were not only popular with the participants but are also covered widely in the literature. The first commonality found between the findings and literature was in the role of learning mediator (facilitator), identified by the participants as the most important role to fulfil. It was also used the most by Fatima, Lisa, Megan and Beauty in their lessons. During the observations it was clear that there was some misperception about what facilitating learning entails, since some of the participants were not sure how to fulfil the role. The literature suggests that the role of the facilitator is to act as an intermediary between the variables outside the classroom and the learners in order to assist the learners in their learning (Tylee 1992). Wenden (1991) found that when teachers transform themselves into facilitators they are able to offer suggestions to the learners on how to construct their own knowledge and make sense of the environment around them. If teachers are able to master the skill of facilitation, learners could become independent learners and masters of their future.

The second role that was utilised by the participants and discussed frequently in the literature was that of learning area specialist. Since most of the participants taught in the FET phase, they were required to have excellent subject knowledge, even though that might not always be the case at other schools. Megan, Fatima, Rina and Austin showed excellent subject knowledge and stated that the more experience one has the better one's subject knowledge becomes. Schools like West Quay, Kings Cross and Stratford, that employ these excellent teachers, can also guarantee that quality education takes place in their classrooms, because of the quality of their teachers. Examples that justify this comment include the participants using subject specific terminology and familiarising their learners with it, and the ability they have to explain complex concepts and calculations in such a way that the learners are able to understand them. Stronge (2007) reasons that specialist teachers with excellent subject knowledge are better able to go beyond textbook content and involve learners in meaningful discussions and learner-centred activities. In terms of qualifications, Wenglinsky (2000)

found that teachers with a degree in their subject area are associated with higher learner achievement.

Another role raised in the literature and utilised by the participants is that of interpreter and designer of learning programmes. Fatima, Rina and Lisa compiled their own notes, activities and worksheets, while Megan, Beauty and Austin mainly focussed on setting tests and administering portfolios. When asked why they made the effort they unanimously answered that there were too many textbooks on the market and not one covered all the content sufficiently. For this reason the participants (Fatima and Rina) made an extra effort to ensure their learners had sufficient information and worksheets. Fatima also differentiated the worksheets, thus ensuring learners would grow and complete their understanding of the specific learning outcome (LO) and assessment standard (AS). When selecting curriculum and designing class activities it is important that the teacher ensures that examples of diversity are represented. Richardson (2007) noted that it is important in notes and activities to use real-life examples with which the learners are familiar and that are relevant to current society. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) explain that teachers should also take into consideration learners' interests, culture and maturity levels when designing programmes and deciding the length of time that must be spent on them. A number of authors (McClafferty & Artiles, 1998; Zeichner et al., 1996) agree that teachers need to adjust their lesson plans to teach diverse learners by becoming sensitive to their needs and keeping that in mind when designing learning programmes.

Management, administration and leadership are similarly highlighted by literature and the participants. Megan, Fatima, Lisa and Beauty were all post-level 1 teachers and as such could only fulfil the role in their own class. Teachers will not have the opportunity or experience to play this specific role to its full extent if they do not get the chance for promotion. Until that chance presents itself, teachers will have to master the role required of them for their specific post-level. Some of the administrative tasks of teachers discussed in the literature include: investigating a learner's absenteeism; photocopy work; typing; keeping and filing records; preparation; setting up and taking down classroom resources; producing analyses of attendance figures; producing analyses of examination results; collecting learner reports; and

ordering supplies and equipment (Alan, 1997). Rina and Austin were both Head of Department (HoD) for Science at their respective schools and mentioned that as leaders they were concerned with responding appropriately to diversity amongst learners (Lumby & Coleman, 2007). Teachers can also be managers, some trained others not, yet they are expected to manage the most difficult and arguably the most demanding of professions, which is teaching (Farhad, 1995). The concept of the teacher as manager is established as important in effective teaching (Cole, 2005). From the findings and literature one can make the assumption that whether a teacher is a leader, an administrator or a manager, the roles contribute to the effective running of a school and classroom and consequently lead to learners receiving a better quality of education.

The final role discussed in the literature and reflected in the findings is that of an assessor. Rina assessed her learners by asking them questions throughout the practical lesson as well as giving them a worksheet to complete, while Lisa used a rubric to assess the learners' dances and later gave them a test to determine if they knew the required theory. Megan, Fatima, Beauty and Austin made use of formative assessment by giving their learners homework and assignments on a regular basis. All the participants used the marks obtained from tests and examinations for their summative assessment. Black and William (1999) use the term 'assessment' to refer to all activities undertaken by teachers and by their learners in assessing themselves. Some of the participants should incorporate different assessment tools, techniques and methods to add variety and make their subjects more active and stimulating. By using a selection of assessment approaches, learners' views of assessment are broadened, which is important for determining the quality of education taking place. Terwilliger (1997) have reported that there is a need for learners to be able to assess themselves and understand how to improve, while for Dietel et al. (1991) it is through classroom assessment that attitudes, skills, knowledge and thinking are fostered, nurtured and accelerated or stifled. While assessment has the potential to improve learning for all learners, historically it has acted as a barrier rather than a bridge to educational opportunity, since many teachers feel it is not their main concern (Ballard & Clanchy, 1991). Nevertheless, as Hamp-Lyons (2003) confirms, assessment is every teacher's job and responsibility.

5.2.5 Diversity as a resource

Four of the six participants said that they used the diversity of their learners as a resource. From the findings the deduction can be made that some subjects lend themselves to incorporating the diversity of the learners more easily, notably Afrikaans, Science and Arts and Culture. These subjects require the teachers and learners to debate topics and allow them to share their culture, views and beliefs about them. The more diverse the classroom the more inputs one will receive, thus aiding the learning process. This goes beyond what any teacher can plan for a lesson, and allows the learners to guide themselves on their learning journey. The assumption that certain subjects are easier to use than others has been justified by the comments of the participants; however, this does not exclude the other subjects. Teachers of, for example, English, Mathematics, Accounting, Business Studies, Tourism, Geography, Technical Drawing have the opportunity and potential to use their learners as a resource, and while it might require more skill, experience and practice, it is definitely worth the effort. To assist teachers in this quest, cooperative learning is a good place to start (see section 5.2.3), as this teaching strategy can be used in any lesson and will guide the teacher and make the adjustment trouble-free. As Gordon et al. (2010) report, some teachers are utilizing diversity as an essential resource and exemplify teaching excellence. The principles of culturally responsive teaching, i.e., *validity, comprehensiveness and transformation* (Gay, 2000), complement this section since differences between the learners (e.g., culture, religion, tradition, language) affect the way they learn. Culturally responsive teachers respect the cultures and experiences of the diverse classroom and use the differences as a teaching resource. If this is carried out in a positive and constructive manner, all will reap the benefits.

5.2.6 Quality assurance

An integral part of the study is how teachers ensure quality education while playing their various roles. Adequate literature is available on quality assurance in general (Allais, 2009; Cheng, 1996; Cheng & Tam, 1997; Fraser, 2008; King & Watson, 2010; Monnapula-Mapesela & Moraka, 2008; Sen, 1999; Slade, 2001; Tenner & Detoro, 1992; Tikly & Barrett, 2011; Young & Allais, 2004), and had to be adjusted to incorporate the diversity aspect. The participants and principals at the sampled schools provided substantial evidence of how each responded to ensuring quality education, however it was difficult for Megan to find an exact

definition of 'quality' because it is a broad concept and consists of so many uncontrollable variables. Barrett (2011) found that there is no precise definition of quality because it is never entirely the teacher's but rather belongs also to the many policymakers, educational professionals, learners and parents, all of whom influence and participate in education in various diverse contexts around the world.

The other participants identified points that can either aid or hinder quality assurance, with Megan, for instance, saying that it was necessary for teachers to have the right qualifications and to deal with discipline problems. She was of the opinion that quality learning cannot take place if the teacher is not prepared and if there is chaos in the classroom. For Fatima, quality should not be determined holistically, and ideally teachers should determine what quality is for every individual in the class, by teachers setting individual targets and encourage the learning to meet them. Teachers should be responsible when setting targets since it must still be within their reach and should not discourage them if the target is not achieved. Fatima ensured that quality teaching and learning took place by creating extra worksheets and encouraging learners to review past knowledge in order to be on task and ready for any challenge. She had a floating timetable and because she did not have her own classroom she had to find available ones in which to teach. My initial thought was that this should have a negative impact on the quality of her teaching, until the interview in which she disclosed the strategies she had in place to counteract that. For Fatima, being a highly competent and organised teacher are important qualities that help ensure her learners receive a better quality of education.

Rina ensured that her learners receive a better quality of education by being prepared, knowing her subject, being organised and going beyond what was expected of her. She had many extra resources at her disposal to make the lesson fun and exciting and maintained a high standard in that way. Unfortunately, not all teachers are like Rina, with some neglecting those learners who are culturally different from them, since they lack the necessary knowledge to deal with the learners. As noted by Glasgow et al. (2006), diverse learners often receive a less-than-equitable learning experience, therefore it is essential that all teachers acquire the appropriate attitudes, knowledge and disposition needed to work effectively with

learners from varied cultural or class backgrounds (Vandeyar, 2008b). Lisa ensured quality teaching and learning by using the latest social networking media to communicate with her learners, particularly when setting new tasks and challenges. Even though learners might not have an online computer in their home, most have cell phones that can connect to the Internet. Alternatively, if the school is fortunate enough to have a computer room with Internet access, learners could use it for research and to work on their portfolios. As Suh (2010) has found, using technology in meeting learners' needs has worked well and yielded beneficial results. Lisa maintained the standard in her lessons and during practicals by being strict and enforcing her rules, while Beauty strove for better quality in her lessons by being well prepared, making the lessons interesting, getting and keeping the learners' attention, scheduling regular assessments and providing constructive feedback. On the other hand, Austin had a different approach to quality, believing that by equipping the learners not just in one's own subject but in life lessons as well, one can reach the ultimate level of quality as the learners become independent.

To conclude, the choice of assessment and quality control measures depends on the school, the management team, the teachers, and the structures in place. Teachers have the means, processes and resources at their disposal and, as Allais (2009) found, these processes are put in place to keep track of quality in education institutions. Therefore, instead of trying to improve them, teachers just need to use them. They should go beyond the norm and brainstorm with fellow teachers on new approaches that can be used and how existing practices can be streamlined and made more effective. In order to assure quality in education, Cameron (1996) proposes that teachers be rigorously prepared, both in pedagogy and subject matter, to facilitate a class of diverse learners.

5.2.7 Definition of diversity

A clear definition of diversity is allusive, whether in the literature or from the participants, however, the latter did have some common perspectives of the concept. Fatima, Rina, Beauty and Austin commented that diversity meant 'different', as in different cultures, races, traditions, languages, beliefs, abilities, religion and interests, a view shared by Morrison (2006) and Wellner (2000), who define it as the condition of being different or having

differences. Even though these participants recognised diversity as being ‘different’, they still had a limited grasp of what it entailed holistically, and were not able to justify or expand on their original explanation. Loden and Rosener (1991) reported that when applied to human relationships diversity has been known to cover secondary areas such as age, thought, communication style, work style, lifestyle, educational background, marital status, work experience and income, which not one of the participants was able to identify.

According to Norton and Fox (1997), some people become so focused on what diversity means that they impose their view on others, which may not be appropriate in a school environment. Fatima did not appear to impose such views on her learners, but rather said that she was sensitive to their needs and differences and made sure none of them felt intimidated by her actions and/or words. For Rina her diversity went hand in hand with multicultural education, the one complementing the other. Gordon et al. (2010) have found that a common definition for diversity is not possible in pedagogical contexts; it is therefore the responsibility of every teacher to define diversity in a practical way, and one unique to their micro and macro environment.

5.2.8 Assimilation and the colour-blind approach

A challenge identified from the literature and confirmed during the interviews and observations at Kings Cross, West Quay and Stratford was that most former model C schools still rely on assimilation to use during integration and desegregation. Lemmer et al., (2006) explain that assimilation occurs when minority groups are expected to become incorporated into the dominant culture of the school. The principal from West Quay mentioned that they celebrate the differences of their learners by having a cultural week at school, which is similar to the celebratory (contributionist) approach that has been found to be unsuccessful in creating one culture (Heerden, 1998). Kings Cross does not have any multicultural days but acknowledges the diversity of the learners by adhering to the various religious holidays and allowing Muslim learners to leave school early on a Friday to attend prayers. There the staff encourage the learners to form part of the school’s identity by becoming a ‘Crossy,’ after its name. Even though the assimilation approached is regarded unfavourably it is evident from

the literature and participants that it still takes place in schools as a way of facilitating the process, albeit unsuccessfully.

Being ‘colour-blind,’ that is supposedly oblivious to different ethnic characteristics, can be another challenge that must be overcome by teachers (Jansen & Christie, 1998). If, like Austin, one does not see the colour of the learners how can one appreciate their differences and use their diversity as a resource? Austin could not utilise the advantages of his diverse learners since he did not ‘see’ or acknowledge their differences. Teachers and learners who have different backgrounds might be a challenge, which can lead to cultural mismatches and taint the prospects of their academic success (Ladson-Billings, 2005). Sadker et al. (2008) claim that teachers struggle to teach learners with backgrounds different from their own, hence it is vital for them to understand the differences of the learners and how these affect learning. Sowers (2004) agrees that teachers need to go beyond the cultural mismatch theory to ensure high expectations for all learners. The principle of culturally responsible teaching, i.e. *empowerment* (Gay, 2000), can be seen as a challenge for many teachers. Other than academically challenging the learners, teachers also need to empower learners to be more successful learners and hence better human beings who grow up and contribute to sustainable communities. This can only be achieved if teachers really see their learners and acknowledge that they are not only different but unique.

5.2.9 Diversity and its challenges

Both the literature and findings from this research study suggest that when dealing with diverse learners various challenges can be found. Even though the literature did not specify the challenges it made assumptions as to what challenges teachers can expect. The participants were more specific, with Megan saying that teaching diverse learners requires her to be more than one person at a time. She said that one needs to differentiate by assisting the slow learners but at the same time challenging the brighter ones. She also touched on the issue of discipline, emphasising the need to manage behaviour in class, without upsetting sensitive learners by one’s actions, e.g., shouting or using offensive language. On the other hand, for Rina the challenge was adequately to meet the standards and needs of the different learners.

Sayed and Ahmed (2011) have found that it is only through open debate that the tension between creating education systems that are accessible to all learners and at the same time meet their diverse learning needs can be resolved. By communicating with the learners, fellow teachers and parents, one will be able to balance suitable education systems and meeting the needs of the learners. The challenge for Fatima and Beauty was being sensitive to the different cultures and beliefs and building trusting relationships while maintaining the right attitude.

5.2.10 Lifelong learning

From the literature and the findings from the research study, lifelong learning emerged as a goal strived for by many. During the interview with the principals they commented that some of the teachers at their schools were furthering their education, however only one, Beauty, was enrolled for a course and fulfilling her role as a lifelong learner. The other participants saw themselves as lifelong learners and recognised the benefit of enriching themselves and acquiring new knowledge, yet they did it every day and did not see the need for taking a course if they could learn firsthand from their superiors and peers. Nicholls (2000) writes that, by the very nature of their position and their job they are involved in lifelong learning. The participants said that if they were not actively enriching themselves they were not growing as teachers or lifelong learners. This can be achieved by attending professional growth and development workshops and training. It is the nature and form of this subsequent learning that identifies teachers as true lifelong learners (Doring, 2002). Perry et al. (2009) write that the pedagogical skills necessary for the required diversity-education classroom are complex and extensive, therefore it is the responsibility of a multicultural teacher to have sufficient skills and experience to educate learners of a diverse nature. The role of scholar, researcher and lifelong learner is thus justified.

5.3 DIFFERENCES FROM THE LITERATURE

The main difference between the findings of this study and the literature is certain roles that were not utilized by the participants (section 5.3.1). The abandoned or neglected roles were those of change agent, community member, citizen and pastoral carer. The second difference

found is the emphasis in literature on diversity training, compared to the participants' feeling that their training was lacking (section 5.3.2). The final difference is the adjustment that teachers had to make with regard the language used in the classroom (section 5.3.3).

5.3.1 Roles of teachers

Some of the roles were not played by the teachers, even though they were discussed in the literature. None of the participants mentioned that a teacher's role should include that of change agent, yet as such one is constantly asking questions and seeking answers, having the courage to move forward and implement practices and policies that create a more equitable education for all learners (Rasool & Curtis, 2000). Being a change agent, not only in the school but also in the classroom, will complement the role as a teacher and give one the courage to make an extra effort to provide unbiased education. Fullan (2001) writes that educational change depends on what teachers think and do, and that it is as simple and complex as that.

The community, citizenship and pastoral role were not identified during the interviews and observations with the participants, therefore it is a role that is either neglected by teachers or not deemed sufficiently important. From a researcher's and teacher's perspective it would be a great advantage if the community were to be involved in subject discussions and tasks. For example, learners could consult members of the community or owners of businesses to help them complete an assignment. In this way the community would help support teaching practices, particularly in addressing the uncertainty that accompanies non-routine teaching, as encouraged by many school reform initiatives (Gamoran, 2003). Register teachers could be given the opportunity to discuss certain community-based problems, e.g., gangs, crime and HIV, during morning registration and keep the learners aware of the problems as well as inform them as to how they can contribute to solving the issues.

Calvert and Henderson (1994) have stated that pastoral topics should be part of a compulsory training programme at universities and colleges, designed to prepare teachers for this role, one that is new role for most teachers and seemingly not easily embraced (Harley et al., 2000). It also requires teachers to become involved in extramural activities, so not only will this allow

them to bond and socialize with the learners in an informal and fun way, but it will also give teachers the experience and example in their classes to make the lesson more relevant and exciting. Some teachers might not be comfortable in discussing more serious topics, such as abuse, sexual harassment, bullying, teenage pregnancy or HIV with their learners, so for this reason many schools have employed psychologists or guidance counsellors to deal with the sensitive topics.

5.3.2 Insufficient diversity training versus experience

Having focused in section 5.2.1 on the similarity of diversity training, a difference arises in evaluating the quality and effectiveness of the courses offered at institutions. The literature suggests that diversity training is crucial yet the participants commented that the quality of diversity training they received was unacceptable. Megan and Lisa were the only participants to have received any, but regarded it as insufficient. The only benefit that Fatima, Rina, Beauty and Austin had above Megan and Lisa was that they had learned through experience and had to educate themselves about diversity. The four senior teachers had 87 years of teaching experience between them, whereas Megan and Lisa had only 11 years. The participants all mentioned that the only way teachers could prepare and sufficiently teach a class of diverse learners was by having sufficient experience. The question then arises as to what constitutes sufficient experience, and it would depend on the personality, beliefs and identity of each teacher, as well as the responsibilities and roles they have at their current place of employment. A teacher who is exposed to the various facets of the school environment, for instance managerial, academic, sporting, culture and social, would be able to gain more experience than a teacher who is not as involved. From the discussions one can deduce that experienced teachers excel over newly qualified teachers who did receive diversity training. Experienced teachers have learned through trial and error what works and what does not, have real life experience and are able to deal with different scenarios. Newly qualified teachers might have certain academic knowledge acquired from reading, but this is insufficient since theory does not necessarily reflect what happens in practice.

An approach to improve the quality of diversity training could be to get a quality assurance body to accredit each institution's course on diversity and have a competition nationally to see

which offers the best (Akiba et al., 2010; Shudak, 2010). If these institutions are serious about improving their diversity courses they must overcome their challenges and biases and make this a priority (Akiba et al., 2010; Beykont, 2002; Jones, 2004; Meier, 2005). In addition, the institutions could decide to expose the pre-service teachers to the real life classroom situation before they go for teaching practise, so that they know what to expect. This can be done by watching films or videos, reading various newspaper articles, and having discussions on different scenarios and case studies (Amin & Ramrathan, 2009). The only way in which this can be realized is to get together the relevant stakeholders, to be consistent and have the same goals and objectives with regards to diversity training and education (Brown, 2007). The principle of culturally responsible teaching, i.e., *comprehensiveness* (Gay, 2000), links with this section, since being a comprehensive teacher requires one to have sufficient knowledge and to develop intellectually, socially, emotionally and politically. This can be achieved through the correct training, a positive mindset and sufficient experience. The culturally responsive teaching, embodied in the *emancipatory* principle, also links with this section since teachers cannot break away from oppressive education or use different strategies, such as windows and mirrors, to allow the learners to experience something new and special if they do not receive appropriate training.

5.3.3 Adjustment teachers had to make with regards to language

The literature discusses extensively the different languages used in South African classrooms and the situation in schools regarding single, double and parallel mediums of instruction, yet the participants did not realise how great an adjustment this would be for them. The difference (adjustment) participants found demanding was that of the different languages being used by learners. Half had an Afrikaans background and had to adjust and familiarise themselves with English, while the other half had an English/African background and had to adjust to Afrikaans. The home language is not significant, only the necessity for all of the participants to come to terms with this adjustment. Not only did the teachers have to adapt but learners with an African home language now had to take English as their first, home, language and Afrikaans as their second, additional, language. When looking at the adjustments the teachers had to make to their teaching style and use of language, some found it much easier to adjust than others. Asked what they thought assisted in this transformation, Megan said it depended

on one's background and culture. For Rina it was about one's personality and attitude, while Fatima commented that her experience had helped her make the adjustment (see Chapter Four).

5.4 ENGAGING WITH THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THIS STUDY: CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

The conceptual framework used during this study has been culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2000), with the six principles being validity, comprehensiveness, multi-dimensionality, empowerment, transformation and emancipation (See 2.6). Initially, the conceptual framework seemed appropriate yet some limitations were identified. The limitation is that the literature supports culturally responsive teaching yet the participants had not heard of it and, when asked, had a misperception of what it entails. Not one of the participants was able to utilise all the principles while Austin and Fatima were able to utilise five, Megan and Lisa four, Beauty three and Rina only two. How, therefore, does one judge or determine who is culturally responsible and who is not? How many principles must be present before the teacher can be seen as culturally responsible? Does one have to use the principles every day? These are some of the questions that the researcher had to think of during the research process. I argue that one should rather be aware of the six principles and incorporate them into every aspect of life, then it will emerge naturally in the lesson and be visible in the teaching style. Learners are very alert when it comes to the actions and behaviour of their teachers, and if the actions represent those of a culturally responsible teacher the learners will pick them up and appreciate the effort.

As a result of being a culturally responsive teacher, the academic achievement of diverse learners will improve when they are taught through their own cultural and experiential filters (Foster, 1995; Gay 2000; Hollins, 1996; Kleinfeld, 1975; Ladson-billings, 1994, 1995). During the observations I noticed that Fatima used windows and mirrors, and shared views about religion and beliefs with the learners, and vice versa. Proverbially, this is an excellent example of how a teacher's actions speak louder than words.

Figure 5.1 (below) represents the principles of culturally responsive teaching as used in Chapter Two.

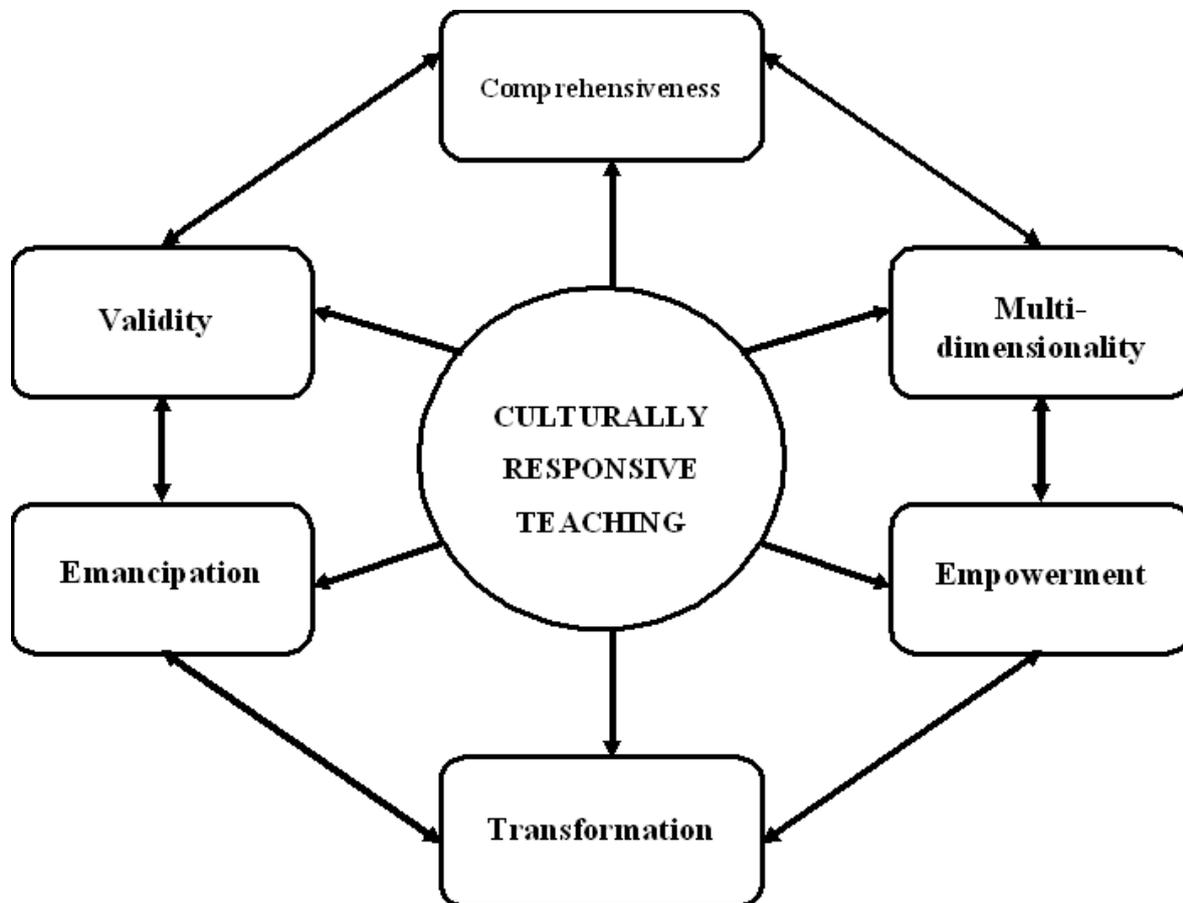


Figure 5.1. Principles of culturally responsive teaching

The figure has been altered to include the sections of the study that each principle complemented (See figure 5.2). This is important because culturally responsive teachers can ensure that they utilise the principles by using the diversity of their learners as a resource, focussing on the role of the teacher, receiving sufficient diversity training, having the necessary experience and rejecting assimilation and the colour-blind approach. The conceptual framework was elaborated on in sections 5.2 and 5.3 with supporting information from the literature and findings.

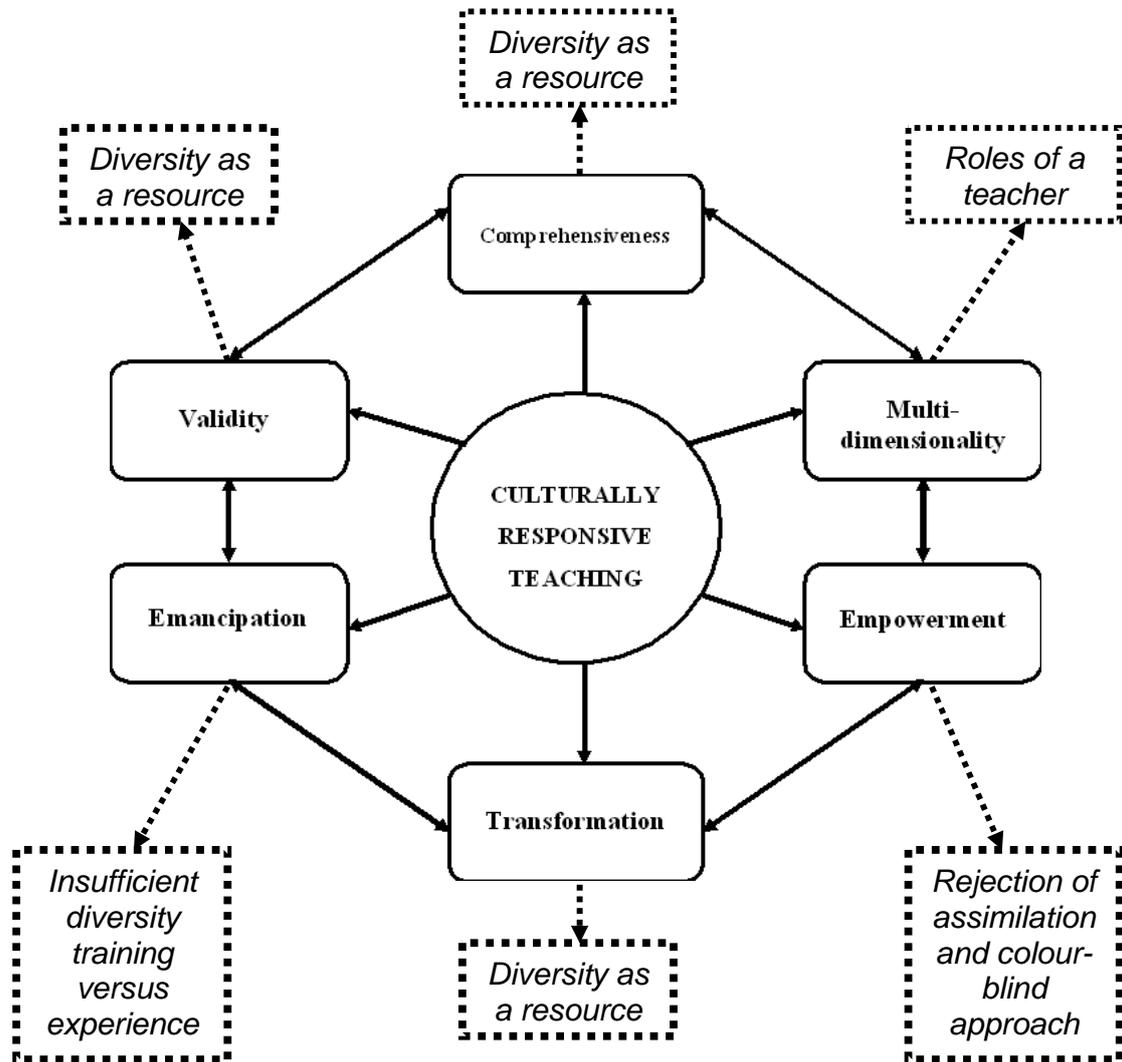


Figure 5.2. Principles of culturally responsive teaching incorporated into the findings of the study

5.5 SILENCES IN THE FINDINGS

The purpose of this section is to identify areas found in the literature review which did not surface as findings in the study. The first is that teachers' pedagogy must be rooted in cultural understandings to empower them for culturally responsive teaching. However, in the study, none of the teachers or learners placed any value on cultural aspects, but instead looked at

diversity as a whole, without focussing on one specific aspect. The second is that while African American and Hispanic learners in the USA are taught by inexperienced teachers the participants at the sampled schools had adequate qualifications and experience to educate learners in their learning areas. The participants were representative of South Africa's population and even though a cultural gap still exists between the teachers and learners, strategies are in place to address the imbalance. The final silence is that literature has ample examples of how technology is used to teach diverse learners and meet their needs, yet the schools in the study (and others in South Africa) do not have the financial means to purchase the technology or train their teachers in its use. Although the study revealed more similarities with the literature than silences it is important to recognise the areas and to improve where possible.

5.6 SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

The literature suggests that much emphasis is placed on diversity training by teacher training institutions (Akiba et al, 2010; Amin & Ramrethan, 2009; Banks, 1995; Beykont, 2002; Biesta, 2004; Brown, 2007; Cochran-Smith, 2001; Gagliardi, 1994; Jones, 2004; Keengwe, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2001; Meier, 2005; Moore & Reeves-Kazelskis, 1992; Richards et al., 2007; Shudak, 2010; Sleeter, 1991; Silverman, 2010; Smith, 2004; Taylor, 2010), however, all of the participants mentioned that the training they received had not been helpful in their diverse classrooms. Institutions need to look seriously at the courses they offer and re-evaluate their effectiveness in today's school context. No reference was found in the literature that teachers have to make an adjustment to their teaching style when teaching in a diverse setting, yet half of the participants mentioned that this adjustment was inevitable.

Literature does however suggest that teaching styles depend greatly on the teachers' perceptions, beliefs, identity and experience. Ample literature is available to motivate and justify the main roles of teachers (Alan, 1997; Artiles et al., 2000; Banks, 2001; Brown, 2007; Cartledge & Kourea, 2008; Doring, 2002; Gamoran, 2003; Harrison, 1998; Lemmer et al., 2006; Lumby & Coleman, 2007; McClafferty and Artiles, 1998; Ministry of Education, 2000; Nicholls, 2000; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Richards et al., 2007; Richardson, 2007; Rotgans

& Schmidt, 2010; Terwilliger, 1997; Timperley & Alton-Lee, 2008; Tylee, 1992; Wenden, 1991; Yang, 1998), similarly, it identifies additional roles teachers should fulfil. The question can then be asked, how much is going to be expected from teachers? Teachers are special people, but even the best can buckle under pressure. The more pressure is put on them, in terms of the various roles they play, the fewer 'expert' teachers there will be.

Diversity as a concept is so broad that it had to be dividing into sub-sections. From the literature and participants it was found that there cannot be only one definition for diversity, but rather it depends on the learners, teachers, school and community. Every institution must thus formulate an appropriate definition. From the literature and the participants it was found that the diversity of the learners influences one's role as teacher to some extent, which is why teachers need the correct knowledge to know how to deal with this influence.

Diversity also poses different challenges which teachers should be able to confront head-on and turn into opportunities, instead of viewing them as threats. Cooperative learning was suggested in some literature as the best approach to use when dealing with diverse learners, however the participants were unfamiliar with the teaching strategies. Only when it was explained did they see the value of utilising cooperative learning.

Finally, quality assurance is taken very seriously by the participants and, as seen in the literature, various scholars offer strategies and models on how quality in education can be improved. Just how effective each of the schools' and participants' quality assurance methods are can be debated, and usefully reviewed by the stakeholders.

5.7 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter has presented the findings, literature and conceptual framework holistically. The focus was on the similarities and differences found between the literature and the findings as well as the silences that were identified. During the chapter the researcher was able to add a personal voice by making assumptions, commenting on issues or asking rhetorical questions. Similar discoveries were made and consequently future research may be conducted into the

differences, such as the neglect of certain roles, teachers' lack of familiarity with culturally responsive teaching, and the insufficient diversity training offered at institutions.

In Chapter Six, recommendations will be provided for the issues that arose and the research questions revisited. Limitations and contributions will be identified and the research will be concluded by proposing areas for future research.

CHAPTER SIX

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to provide recommendations for the themes and findings that surfaced during the analysis and discussion section. The findings cannot be generalized to the rest of the population, however they will provide the relevant stakeholders with evidence from research and material with which to work in their respective fields and professions. Furthermore, they will contribute to future research into related fields that it has not been possible to include here but which are necessary to examine. Section 6.2 will provide a summary of the key findings from the study. Section 6.3 will review the significance of the findings and new knowledge generated. In section 6.4 the research assumptions will be revisited. Limitations of the study will be identified in section 6.5 while suggestions for future research will be offered in section 6.6. Recommendations for the study will be presented in section 6.7 and the chapter and research study will be concluded in section 6.8.

6.2 RESPONDING TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question of this study is: *How do teachers ensure quality education in a class of diverse learners?* Secondary research questions were specifically formulated to ensure that the most relevant data was collected. The findings in turn provided a comprehensive answer to the research questions.

The first question was aimed at determining how monocultural teacher training influenced teachers' pedagogy. The teachers in the study had received and completed their training at monocultural institutions (Fatima, Rina, Beauty and Austin), but had not received any diversity training since it was not regarded as necessary in the apartheid years, nor was it a

prerequisite for pre-service teacher training. What training teachers did receive was monocultural, as there was no need for diversity education in schools that were segregated and consisted of one homogenous group of learners. The institutions and teachers did not realise during those times that they were faced with diversity in a covert way, for although the learners might have *looked* the same, they still had different needs, abilities, interests, beliefs and personalities. Now it is recognised that teachers should know how to prepare and present lessons for all learners, regardless of their differences, but for Fatima, Rina, Beauty and Austin, monocultural training had contributed to their pedagogy in general but the lack of diversity training disadvantaged them. Following the changes in the country in the 1990s they were unsure how to adapt their pedagogy to meet the needs of their diverse learners.

The second question sought to discover adjustments teachers make to their teaching style in order to accommodate a class of diverse learners. As noted in Chapter Five, the researcher did not come across any literature that explained or justified the adjustment that teachers need to make to their teaching style. The participants did mention (see Chapter Four) that they had to adjust their teaching style to accommodate their diverse learners, including changing their approach to present difficult concepts that learners might not understand or relate to; changing the examples that teachers use when discussing new work or confusing topics; and using different languages such as Afrikaans and English in class. The participants dealt with the adjustment in different ways, depending on such factors as their background, culture, experience, personality and attitude. The changes that need to be made may be small or quite substantial, but they will be determined by the teachers' experience of school, learners and personal issues. Since no literature is available to substantiate my findings, this could be researched further in the future.

The challenges involved in teaching a class of diverse learners were behind the third research question. Both the literature and participants confirmed that challenges exist in teaching a class of diverse learners, but more so the latter, who identified: being more than one person at a time; being able to differentiate the homework and the tasks to challenge all ability levels; disciplining the learners without offending anyone; using appropriate examples for the subject; and being sensitive to the various cultures and beliefs. Depending on the nature and

location of the school, the composition of the learners, and the socio-economic conditions in the community, teachers might face different and varying challenges. It is important that they determine the challenges unique to their environment and find the best possible solutions and way forward.

The fourth research question looked at how a class of diverse learners influence the role of the teacher. The assumptions can be made that the learners' diversity will have an influence on the role of the teacher, but *how* their role is influenced is unclear. Three of the six participants (Megan, Fatima and Lisa) believed that influences do exist, some of which are: speaking differently to different cultures, realising that one's teaching style should be adjusted; one's jokes and comments should not be offensive; one must be sensitive to the learners' needs and circumstances; and a diverse class complements one's role as a teacher. The other three participants (Rina, Beauty and Austin) said that that such a class does not influence one's role or that it is not supposed to. Since no conclusive findings are available, future research in this area is suggested.

Quality assurance practices put in place by the teacher and the school underpinned the fifth research question. West Quay, Kings Cross and Stratford, as well as the participants, explained and justified the various quality assurance practices in place at the schools. The researcher expressed her concern as to the effectiveness and appropriateness of the practices and suggested that new and more modern approaches be implemented by the DoE to ensure quality in education in the years to come. Teachers could also take the initiative and work together in support groups to devise user-friendly approaches for use by teachers and learners, regardless of the learning area or grade. Research could also be conducted by teachers and students to find alternative quality assurance practices.

The final research question investigated how quality is ensured and maintained at schools. As with the previous question, it should be discussed as a whole by focusing on the similarities. The type of quality assurance practices in place will determine how the principal, deputy principal and HoDs will ensure the quality of education at each of their schools. Standard practices are in place at West Quay, Kings Cross and Stratford, such as file and class

inspection by the DoE, monitoring of IQMS by the School Development Team (SDT), whole school evaluation by the school assessment team (SAT), moderation and class visits by the HoD and quality control carried out by each individual teacher. If controlled and managed vigorously by the principal, schools will overcome challenges and improve their standards.

6.3 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The key findings from the study include diversity training (6.3.1), the role of the teacher (6.3.2), an asset-based approach to diversity (6.3.3), adjustments teachers had to make to their teaching style (6.3.4), and quality assurance (6.3.5). Each of these findings will now be discussed.

6.3.1 Diversity training

For Christie (1996) the roles a teacher plays in a class of diverse learners are ultimately shaped by the education and training they receive. However, the findings of this study disagree with that statement, with the participants denying that their training, whether monocultural or multicultural, had influenced their roles. The focus should rather be on diversity education and training, since there seems to be a gap between what the learners learn at university and what they are required to do in the school classroom. Findings revealed that monocultural teachers had not received any diversity training since it was not deemed important during the apartheid years. Teachers who were trained a decade ago did receive some diversity training, but the participants commented that the training was insufficient and did not prepare them for their diverse classrooms. Today, student teachers are still receiving diversity training, however, the appropriateness of their courses should be determined in order to ensure that they are better prepared for diverse classrooms in the future. Institutions must consider that as society changes there is a need to remodel teacher training programmes and prepare new teachers to confront the challenges of the future (Esteve, 2000).

6.3.2 The role of the teacher

Most of the participants were performing the basic functions of a teacher, for example learning mediator (facilitator), learning area specialist, interpreter and designer of learning

programmes, and assessor. When asked about the seven roles prescribed by the NSE (National Education Policy Act, 1996), the teachers identified the basic ones but neglected to mention others, for instance as leader, administrator and manager, scholar, researcher and lifelong learner, community member, citizen, and pastor. It is vital that teachers switch between the different roles and ensure they pay the necessary attention and give time to each. This will ensure that the needs of learners are met and that they receive comprehensive education from their teachers.

I believe that more emphasis should be placed on the roles of teachers in order to remind them of their different responsibilities, which can range from putting up posters in classes to offering short courses that outline and refresh the roles. Depending on the personality of the teacher, this might be regarded as placing additional pressure on them to perform all the roles, or they might enjoy the challenge and in the process improve their own practices and teaching style. Petersson, Postholm, Flem and Gudmundsdottir (2004) concur that teachers should find a balance between the many roles they perform.

One of the roles to be emphasised is that of community member, citizen and pastor. Given the current social context and desegregation of values in South African society, teachers need to take on the responsibility of educating the youth to be responsible citizens who can contribute to a sustainable society. This is important because fewer parents are at home and involved in their children's education. The number of single parent and child-headed households are increasing, and one of the few places children can receive stability and structure is at school. This role of the teacher then includes being available for pastoral discussions and instilling values.

6.3.3 An asset-based approach to diversity

The study has found that the diversity of learners should be used as a resource and viewed as an asset in the various learning areas. In so doing, teachers can encourage open class discussions, involve learners in the lesson, keep their attention and use this to promote their understanding about complex topics and terms. Some subjects, such as Afrikaans, Science and Arts and Culture, facilitate the use of diversity as a resource while others require more

planning and creative thinking. In the beginning teachers might struggle to get it right, but by using the trial-and-error approach they will gain confidence and experience and be able to master it relatively quickly.

Diversity has been a challenge that has been around several decades, yet teachers are still uncomfortable with and unaccustomed to the differences in their classroom. They have to formulate a definition of diversity with which they, the learners and other stakeholders are comfortable and familiar, and that will assist them in deciding how they approach the issue. Diversity also poses some challenges of which teachers need to be aware when implementing the necessary strategies. Some of the challenges include planning lessons to reflect different ability levels in the class, utilising different roles from before and adjusting to the language being used at the school. Such strategies minimise any negative impact on teachers' roles and improve the quality of education.

6.3.4 Adjustments to teaching styles

The study also found that teachers in diverse classrooms should adjust their teaching style, but that little literature is available on how they have done so. From the participants' comments one could argue that the adjustment is either unimportant or that they affect it without realizing it. Some of the adjustments include teachers' approach to difficult concepts and how they explain these to the learners. Participants also had to adjust the examples they use, and to get used to different languages and the dynamics of the diverse learners. From personal experience, the adjustment may seem overwhelming. Looking for help in the adjustment to diverse classrooms, I found no information available from the school. It is apparent that the way teachers navigate this adjustment depends rather upon their personality, identity, beliefs and attitudes. Teachers with more experience find the adjustment effortless while others might struggle find it demanding. Either way, during the adjustment it is important for all teachers to examine their own attitudes towards teaching diverse learners in order to provide the best education possible.

The following recommendations are provided to assist teachers with their adjustment: first, schools, institutions or private companies should run support programmes, in which teachers

can then use any the telephone or associated network media to contact qualified staff for possible solutions. Second, more specific training should be provided for teachers in what to expect, with appropriate preparation.

6.3.5 Quality assurance

The three sampled schools and their teachers have appropriate quality assurance policies and practices in place. One of the limitations identified is that all three schools had high Matriculation pass rates and excellent records, hence the findings were expected. The study could have been improved by looking at township schools and comparing the quality assurance policies and practices used. In relation to ensuring the quality of education at schools, it is debateable whether *all* the learners receive quality education or if the school system favours those learners who share the dominant culture of the school. At West Quay they focus on the identity of the school and everyone is part of ‘one big family’; similarly, the principal at Kings Cross encourages the learners to form part of the school’s identity. This sounds ideal, but observing the teachers and learners revealed evidence of a hegemonic culture at the various schools, and a need for learners to adapt. What would this mean in terms of quality? The same quality assurance practices are used on all the learners, regardless of their backgrounds, culture, traditions and beliefs.

Just how effective each of the school’s quality assurance methods and approaches are is debatable, yet most are common in schools throughout South Africa. They are also approved and recommended by the various education departments and checked when inspecting underperforming schools. Many have been in use for several decades and are outdated, so new ones should be brainstormed and considered for implementation in South African schools. One such new approach could be to introduce more computer-based assessments, with schools using the same computer programmes that universities use to assess the students. The computer would be able to mark the test immediately and used to give effective and accurate feedback to the learners and teachers. Learners could also be allowed to complete assignments on the computer and e-mail them to their teachers. Homework, class discussion or extra classes can be promoted by ‘blogging’ or using the other social networks to discuss difficult topics and provide suggestions to other learners.

6.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF FINDINGS

This research study allowed the researcher to contribute to various areas. First, it contributed to settling the researchers' insecurities of the roles a teacher should play in a diverse context (section 6.3.1), second it made a contribution to policy and practice (section 6.3.2), and finally, the silences identified in the literature led to the generation of new knowledge (section 6.3.3).

6.4.1 Contribution to personal growth

The research originated with my own misperception and insecurities of what a teacher in a diverse classroom is suppose to do. During this research journey I have learnt much about diversity and the role I need to play in a class of diverse learners, while keeping the quality of education at the forefront. I have realised that each learner is unique, special and different, and that my teaching style and approach must accommodate all these differences. I have started using the diversity of my learners as a resource, instead of seeing it as a challenge. I have made some adjustments to my beliefs and perceptions and these have allowed me to interact and communicate better with my learners.

Learners have also noticed the change. In the beginning they were quiet and un-cooperative, but subsequently they have opened up, shown more confidence and been able to debate difficult topics. I have seen an improvement in their marks and I am proud of the progress made by the learners and myself. Not only have I settled my own misperception and insecurities about diversity and my role, but I have become a better teacher in the process. It is an aim of the study that it will offer fellow teachers and researchers who are struggling with a similar problem new inspiration and settle some of their own insecurities and concerns.

6.4.2 Significance of study to policy and practice

The significance of the study to policy and practice is to make available to other teachers, schools, HoDs, principals, parents and DoE officials the findings, arguments and comments that emerged. With regard to policy, it is recommended that the DoE encourage institutions to review the courses they offer to pre-service teachers and ensure they meet the necessary requirements. A gap may exist between what pre-service teachers learn at tertiary level and

how it works in practice. The courses should focus on the roles of teachers, diversity issues and how to improve the quality of education. Much attention is given to these issues on the surface but there is a need to investigate and examine them in depth, to obtain ‘real life’ experience that is useful in schools today. Stakeholders could contribute to the curriculum to help teachers include examples of diversity in their learning areas and adjust their teaching style appropriately, so that it addresses diversity in a pro-active way.

The DoE could offer compulsory courses in diversity, teacher roles and quality assurance to senior teachers who have hitherto received monocultural training or who might have forgotten the fundamentals of the profession. The DoE could also offer workshops on how to effectively teach a class of diverse learners and the challenges of which they need to be aware. Improved and modern approaches to quality assurance should be introduced at national level and more standardised assessments should take place in all schools. The necessary resources should also be provided to facilitate the process and make the implementation possible.

With regard to practice, the first step is to help teachers to realise the importance of improving their practice of diversity, their role and quality assurance. Practice cannot be improved if teachers are unwilling to include examples of diversity, adjust their teaching style, utilise more roles and make an extra effort to ensure that quality teaching and learning takes place. By paying attention to change in policies, teachers will be required to reform and become change agents themselves.

6.4.3 Generation of new knowledge

Some silences were identified in the literature and this study consequently led to new knowledge being generated. The new knowledge is that the diversity of teachers’ learners will influence their role as a teacher (section 6.4.3.1) and that certain adjustments must be made to teachers’ teaching style to accommodate their diverse learners (section 6.4.3.2).

6.4.3.1 Diversity and the influence it has on teacher’s roles

A silence identified from the findings and neglected in the literature is the lack of reference to how the diversity of learners influences the role of the teacher. Half of the participants

acknowledged that the diversity of the learners does influence their role as teacher. Megan said that one needs to have respect for the different customs and traditions of the learners and that one's teaching style, comments and jokes must not be offensive to anyone in the class. For Fatima, the diversity of her learners complements her role as a teacher and she allows them to be who they want to be, without hindering their growth or spoiling their potential. Lisa said that relating to the learners might be problematic because of their race, and that it is difficult to realise or imagine the conditions in which they live. Beauty and Rina said that diversity is not supposed to influence their role since it applies to all learners. Austin, on the other hand, did not wish to focus on the differences of his learners.

During the interviews, Austin expressed his dislike for the word 'multicultural' in a class context because he wished to view his learners as just that, learners. The essence of being multicultural is being proud of the differences between oneself and others. If someone dislikes the word her or she might be termed 'colour-blind,' that is not wishing to acknowledge differences in the learners. This could lead to teachers treating everyone the same and not acknowledging differences amongst the learners in the teaching. Teachers must be made aware of this bias, since it might not be obvious to them. Little literature was found on how diversity might affect the role of the teacher, and hence the input from the participants is important in opening up this debate. Gay (2002, 2000) has researched the way culture affects the teachers' role, but this focuses more on culturally responsive teaching, leaving the impact other diversity aspects still to be researched.

6.4.3.2 Adjustment to teaching styles

The majority of the participants commented that they had to make some kind of adjustment to their teaching style in order to accommodate their diverse learners, yet little evidence was found in the literature (see section 6.2.4. above). Even though the adjustment might be subject specific, every teacher in a diverse setting needs to make some kind of adjustment to best meet the needs of his/her learners. Megan, the Maths teacher, and Lisa, the Science teacher, each gave specific examples (see chapter four) of how their subject required them not only to alter their approach, but also to use different examples which the learners can understand and relate to. The focus of this study was not on a specific subject but due to the sampling, the

researcher was able to obtain valuable information, not mentioned in literature. One can therefore assume that certain subjects make it easier for teachers to adjust to their new role and fulfil the needs of the learners, while others might hinder the process. As we could see from Chapter Four, Megan and Lisa's subjects definitely made the adjustment process look effortless.

Another adjustment the participants had to make was the language they had to use in class. Most were teaching at a school in which they needed to use their second language (English), which could lead to an ever greater adjustment having to be made, since South Africa has 11 official languages and so makes classes more diverse. Depending on the location of a school (either urban or rural), different languages could be used as a medium for instruction. Most urban schools mainly use Afrikaans and English, yet with the 11 official languages, schools might be required to offer a third language (as some schools already do). The increase of different languages will add to the diversity of the class and consequently affect the role of the teacher. New knowledge is generated in the sense that teachers and stakeholders revisit current knowledge that might have been forgotten or neglected previously. By emphasising the important and silent aspects of this study, and allowing institutions, schools and teachers to reflect on their practice and progress, new knowledge will be generated.

As stated above, it is intended that teachers going through the same situation or facing similar problems will come to their own conclusion or generate their own knowledge through reading this study. The researcher hopes that stakeholders would allow this change to take place, by introducing the proposed courses and encouraging further research into this field, and in the process adding to the body of knowledge.

6.5 RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS REVISITED

The study was informed by four assumptions that emerged from reviewed literature. In this section a brief review is made of the assumptions, with reference to the findings.

Research assumption 1

Assimilation is still the dominant approach in South African schools (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997; Stolzenberg, 1993; Vandeyar, 2003, Lemmer et al. 2006).

Assimilation has remained the favourite approach in South Africa, especially during desegregation. The findings revealed that Kings Cross and West Quay encourage learners to conform to the identity of the school as a whole, yet in practice it is that of the dominant culture. Learners are still required to 'fit in' with the culture of the school but, because of the vast differences, they struggle to adapt and consequently are disadvantaged. The findings confirm this research assumption.

Research assumption 2

Pre-service teachers are not adequately trained to teach a class of diverse learners (Beykont, 2002; Keengwe, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2001; Smith, 2004).

The findings concur with the second research assumption since the participants explained that the training they received at monocultural and multicultural institutions did not adequately prepare them for diverse learners. The recommendation has been made that more attention be given to the content of these courses to ensure it is rectified in the future. Quality assurance bodies could also be of assistance by looking into the quality of the courses and how successful the implementation is. Since pre-service teachers are faced with diversity in every classroom they need to be adequately prepared for equity in education to be realised.

Research assumption 3

Teachers' perceptions, attitudes and beliefs are formed by their personal experiences and professional education (Jansen, 2001; Jita, 2004; Meier, 2005; Vandeyar 2008a).

The participants commented that their role as a teacher is influenced by their attitudes, identity and beliefs. For Megan these aspects are important since they shape who she is as a person and how she approaches her lessons, yet she will never impose it on her learners. Rina, on the other hand, prefers to remain neutral in order to keep the class discussions focused. Fatima's learners are very inquisitive about her faith and beliefs, and by sharing her viewpoint with the learners (windows and mirrors) they get to know different aspects of her. The

findings from the study confirm the assumption since the teachers are who they are because of their education and experiences.

Research assumption 4

Cooperative learning is an effective approach to use in diverse classrooms (Booyens & Grosser, 2008; Gunter et al., 2003; Johnson, Johnson & Smith, 1998; Joubert et al., 2008).

The findings confirm this assumption since the participants all use group work in their lessons. Some subjects, such as Science and Arts and Culture, could utilise this approach more since their learning area requires the learners to conduct experiments or dance in groups. The more diverse the class, the more diverse the group, and hence its contribution to successful problem solving. The main challenge is for teacher to facilitate the process in a structured and organised manner, and so meet the requirements of optimal group size, heterogeneity of groups, positive interdependence, individual accountability, promotion of interaction and co-operation.

6.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

A number of limitations were identified from the study. First, qualitative research does not collect numeric data from a representative sample of the target audience. As a result, this type of research cannot be subjected to statistical analysis to estimate the extent to which opinions expressed by participants reflect the opinions of the wider population. The most important implication of this limitation is that the researcher should refrain from making generalisations.

Second, diversity is also an issue present in township schools but the sampling did not allow for a township school to be selected. Convenience sampling was used to select the schools since they are close to each other and would limit the time and driving needed to reach them. The limitation identified is that some townships schools should have been selected to investigate how they navigate and recognise the diversity of their learners. Learners are diverse in the sense that they speak different languages, have different cultures and different traditions. There might also be more African immigrants in township schools, a factor which

adds to the diversity criteria. The quality assurance policies and practices used in these schools could have been compared to those of urban schools.

The third limitation is that case study research took place in an open and uncontrolled environment, thus reducing its usefulness as an indicator of cause and effect, since the variables in the study were uncontrolled. This also militates against finding how one value correlates in any way to another.

Fourth, with qualitative research not everything can be observed and it is therefore difficult to interpret the behaviour of the participant (subjectivity). The researcher needs to be careful not to influence the behaviour of the participant as it might affect the data collection. Constant iteration is necessary to ensure that one correctly collects, analyses and reflects on the data.

Fifth, in the future the researcher would choose her participants more carefully, and make sure she does not select a participant who is a newly qualified teacher with limited experience and so provides insufficient input. This oversight went against the aim of the research to look at examples of good practice.

The final limitation was using observations. A considerable amount of training, experience and skill is required to observe and record events accurately and completely. In addition, observation is generally limited to descriptions of what happens in small groups of people, which also limits the ability to generalize the results. The researcher was aware of the limitations and did not allow them to influence the findings. Also acknowledged was a level of subjectivity and the impact it might have on the study.

6.7 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Many of the study's findings resonated with the literature, though they also revealed some silences to be researched in the future, perhaps providing more evidence to substantiate them. The first suggestion is that researchers should investigate the influence that diversity has on teachers' roles. Most of the participants agreed that different learners influence the roles, but because of the lack of diversity training teachers do not know how to minimise or prevent the

effect. As the quality of diversity courses offered at institutions improve, teachers will be more prepared for the diversity that awaits them, but until then more studies are required.

The second suggestion is to research the adjustment that teachers make to their teaching style. As discussed above, the adjustment might be minor or major, depending on the teachers' personal perspective, the school environment or external factors influencing their roles. More research should be conducted into this to assist teachers.

6.8 RECOMMENDATIONS

The first recommendation is to **evaluate the standard of diversity courses offered at institutions nationwide**. If equity in education is to be achieved, all institutions, regardless of their location, socio-economic issues and student demographics, should standardise their courses by offering the same curriculum content. If this recommendation does not seem realistic to the institutions, the least they can do is to review the quality of their current courses and identify areas for improvement. If cooperation is not received a quality assurance body could accredit each institution's courses on diversity (Akiba et al., 2010; Shudak, 2010).

The second recommendation is **for institutions to re-emphasise the importance of teachers' roles**. When teachers are made aware, during training, about the various roles, what exactly they entail and what to do to fulfil each one, fewer problems will be experienced during their first practical experience and later in their career. Some institutions might touch on the roles in their modules, but an audit could be carried out to assess how effective their approach has been.

The third recommendation is to **make teachers aware of the challenges that exist in teaching a class of diverse learners**. More research should be done in different schools and different regions, to determine the challenges and the degree of urgency each pose on the teachers' role and the effect it might have on the quality of education. A standardised list could be made available and discussed during district and cluster meetings, so that teachers can then anticipate the problem and take precautionary measures to prevent major problems.

The final recommendation is that **the diversity of the learners be used as a resource and an asset**. Cultural and linguistic capital of diverse learners should be part of all second and second order changes at schools so that all learners feel a sense of belonging and feeling at home at school. All learners need to have their identities affirmed and teachers can facilitate this process, for example by using windows and mirrors.

6.9 CONCLUSION

The study has followed a qualitative approach with case studies used to report on the findings that emerged. This chapter reviewed the major findings and provided recommendations and a way forward. The study has contributed new knowledge to various areas and offered recommendations for future research. Malcolm X said decades ago: “We can’t teach what we don’t know and we can’t lead where we won’t go” (in Howard, 1999). For teachers this suggests that if we are to urge our learners to be ‘introspective learners’ (Hidalgo, 1993) the classroom, we ourselves must lead the way, this is based on the premise that teachers must ‘practice what they preach.’ In conclusion, if teachers wish to value the diversity of their learners, focus on their various roles and ensure quality education, they need to set the example, take the lead and be pro-active in their approach, so as to get noticed and encourage others to follow the same example. Teachers need to become change agents

You must be the change you want to see in the world (Gandhi, cited in Bhalla, 1995 p. 5)

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Appendix A: Research topic registration: University of Pretoria

Student No.: 21005151
Our ref: Mrs EC Van Baalen
Tel: 012 420 5695
Fax: (012) 420-3951
Email:



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Pretoria 0002 Republic of South Africa
Tel 012 420 3111 Fax 012 420 4555
<http://www.up.ac.za>

2010-06-15

MISS W ERASMUS
Posbus 12067
Queenswood
0121

Dear Miss Erasmus

APPROVAL OF TITLE: DISSERTATION

DEGREE: MEd: Assess.and Quality Assurance in Educ.& Train.

I have pleasure in informing you that the following has been approved:

TITLE: Exploring quality and diversity: The role of the teacher in a class of diverse learners

SUPERVISOR: Prof S VANDEYAR

CO-SUPERVISOR: Dr V SCHERMAN

The requirements for dissertations are listed in the General Information and Regulations of the University. Consult Regulations G.30 to G.61 which are related to dissertations and the assessment thereof.

Summarised guidelines for the submission and technical details of dissertations, a checklist as well as a "Notice of Submission" are attached. Kindly note that, in accordance with Regulation G.60 1(a), your written "Notice of Submission" should reach the Student Administration three months prior to submission.

Your registration as a student must be renewed annually before 28 February until you have complied with all the requirements for the degree. You will only be entitled to the guidance of your supervisor if annual proof of registration is submitted.

Yours sincerely


for DEAN
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
NAG02E



Appendix B: Principal interview questions

**MEd. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT:
QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA**

PRINCIPAL / VICE-PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW

School: _____

Date: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewer: _____

Was the interview recorded? _____

Has the interview been transcribed? _____

Start the interview with the following:

Today is the DATE I am interviewing NAME OF INTERVIEWEE
He/She is the POSITION at NAME OF THE SCHOOL

Questions (Observe and note answer)

- Gender: Male Female
- Home language?
Afrikaans English
Other _____
- Race: White Black Coloured Indian

Questions to be asked to the interviewee:

GENERAL

- What type of school is NAME OF SCHOOL?
- When was the school established?
- How long have you been the principal/vice-principal at the school?
- How would you describe the location of school? (Urban/Rural)
- What mode of transportation do the learners use to reach school?
- What is your medium of instruction?

INTEGRATION/DIVERSITY

- What was the pre-1994 teacher and learner composition?
(Estimated percentages of White, Coloured and Black learners)
- What is the post -1994 teacher and learner composition?
(Estimated percentages of White, Coloured and Black learners)
- How was the integration/desegregation of the new learners facilitated?
- Any problems / successes with the integration/desegregation?
- What is the current teacher and learner composition?
(Estimated percentages of White, Coloured and Black teachers Age)
- Does the school have any multicultural days?
(Whether YES or NO, prompt)
- How you celebrate the diversity of your learners?
- How have the white/black/coloured/Indian learners identified themselves with the school life? (Unacceptable, Average, Good, Excellent)
- How would you explain the attitudes between different racial groups at the school?
- How are the white/ black/coloured/Indian learners participating in extra mural activities?
- Has white/black/coloured/Indian parents provided satisfactory support to the school (SGB members, attending meetings)

ROLE OF THE TEACHER

- According to you, what is the main role of a teacher in a multicultural classroom?
- How do you think the role of the teacher has changed over the years?

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

- Do all your teachers have the necessary teaching qualifications?
(If NO – ask to elaborate)
- Are you aware of any teachers that are currently studying to enhance their qualifications?

QUALITY ASSURANCE

- How would you explain quality teaching and learning to the parents at your school?
- Would you say that quality teaching and learning takes place at your school?
(Yes – Why would you say that? No – why don't you think so?)
- What quality assurance practices does the school have in place?
- What kind of support is provided to the teachers regarding quality assurance?
(HOD, SMT, Support groups?)

Thank you for your time.

Appendix C: Teacher pre-interview questions

**MEd. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT:
QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA**

TEACHER PRE-INTERVIEW

School: _____

Date: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewer: _____

Was the interview recorded? _____

Has the interview been transcribed? _____



Start the interview with the following:

Today is the DATE

I am interviewing NAME OF INTERVIEWEE

He/She is the POSITION for Grade _____ at NAME OF THE SCHOOL

Questions (Ask/Observe and tick)

- Gender:

Male Female

- How old are you? _____

- Home language?

Afrikaans English

Other _____

- Race:

White Black Coloured Indian

QUALIFICATIONS/TRAINING

- Where did you study to become a teacher?

(Was that a monocultural institution?)

- What year did you graduate?

(Pre or Post 1994?)

- How many years did you study?

- What degree or certificate did you obtain?
- Any other degrees? (Where and when?)
- How many years teaching experience do you have?
- How long have you been working at your current school?

DIVERSITY/MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

- What do you understand about the word diversity?
- Do you see yourself as a multicultural teacher?
(Whether yes/no, prompt teacher for examples)
- Did you receive training on how to handle and teach a class of multicultural learners?
(Whether yes/no, prompt teacher for examples)
- What adjustments, if any, to your teaching style, did you have to make in order to accommodate a class of multicultural learners?
- What do you think is your main role as a teacher of multicultural learners?
- How does the diverse nature of the learners influence your role in the classroom?
- Do you regard yourself as a culturally responsible teacher?
(Whether yes/no, prompt teacher for examples)
- Are you familiar with the terms inclusive education/co-operative learning?
- Do you use any of the teaching strategies in your classroom?

DISCIPLINE

- What discipline approach do you use in class?
- How do you ensure that all learners (regardless of gender, race, culture and religion) receive the same treatment concerning discipline?

QUALITY ASSURANCE

- How would you explain/define quality teaching and learning?
- What quality assurance practices do you use in your classroom?
- Do you get support guidelines from your HOD/Principal regarding quality assurance?
- What are your thoughts on the following statement: “A teacher’s perceptions can be a barrier to their learners’ learning”?

Thank you for your time

Appendix D: Teacher post interview (reflection) questions

**MED RESEARCH INSTRUMENT:
QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA.**

**TEACHER POST- INTERVIEW /
REFLECTION**

School: _____

Date: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewer: _____

Was the interview recorded? _____

Has the interview been transcribed? _____

QUESTIONS

- What was your general feeling about the lesson?
- What was good about the lesson?
- What was bad / disappointing about the lesson?
- What teaching strategies did you use?
- Do you think the specific strategy was effective?
(Prompt teacher)
- Are you satisfied with the behaviour/discipline of the black/coloured/Indian and/or white learners? (Prompt teacher)
- Has there been satisfactory progress by the black/coloured/Indian and/or white learners with regards to class work? (Prompt teacher)
- What would you do differently next time around?
- What was your main role during lesson?
- How did you ensure that quality teaching and learning took place during the lesson?

Appendix E: Teacher follow-up interview questions

**MED RESEARCH INSTRUMENT:
QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA.**

TEACHER FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

School: _____

Date: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewer: _____

Was the interview recorded? _____

Has the interview been transcribed? _____

QUESTION 1

How did the training you received at university or college prepare you for diverse learners?

QUESTION 2

How do you know which role to play/fulfil in your classroom?

QUESTION 3

What are the challenges involved teaching a class of diverse learners?

QUESTION 4

How do your beliefs and identity influence your role as a teacher?

QUESTION 5

How do you use the diversity of your learners as a resource?

Thank you for taking the time to answer the questions.

Appendix F: Observation sheet

**MED RESEARCH INSTRUMENT:
QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA.**

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

School: _____

Date: _____

Teacher: _____

Class/Grade: _____

Subject: _____

Observer: _____

Was the observation recorded? _____

- Walking around / standing still?
3. Is the teacher wearing the ‘invisible knapsack’?
- Is white privilege present?
4. Does the teacher acknowledge the diversity of the learners?
- Colour blind – teacher will say ‘we are all the same? I don’t see colour?’
 - Windows/Mirrors – poster reflecting differences of teacher and learners?
 - Does the teacher use appropriate examples when explaining something?
5. Did the teacher involve the whole class?
6. Does the teacher advantage or disadvantage certain learners?
7. Does the teacher seem to be culturally responsible?
- **Validity**
(Cultural heritages that affects learning – is the teaching suitable)
 - **Comprehensiveness**
(Intellectual, societal, emotional and political learning using cultural references)
 - **Multi-dimensional**
(Curriculum and learning content, constructive learning environment, teacher-learner interactions, assessment)
 - **Empowering**
(Does the teacher empower the learners to be better human beings, be more successful, and to contribute to sustainable communities)
 - **Transformative**
(Respect the different cultures? Use experiences of diverse classroom as a teaching resource.)
 - **Emancipatory**
(To free learners – allow them to ask questions and take action)

8. What role did the teacher portray in the class?

- Learning mediator
- Interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials
- Leader, administrator and manager
- Scholar, researcher and lifelong learner
- Community, citizenship and pastoral role
- Assessor
- Learning area/subject specialist

9. Dimensions of multicultural education:

- Content integration
- Knowledge construction
- Prejudice reduction
- Equity pedagogy
- Empowering school culture and social culture

10. What teaching style / strategy were used?

11. Availability of resources?

12. Learner – Learner interaction?

13. Use of language?

C) ASSESSMENT

1. Did any assessment take place?

- Formal
- Informal

2. Did the teacher explain how the lesson will be assessed?

3. Did the teacher allow for questions? How did he/she respond?
4. How did the learners respond to the assessment/questions?
5. What quality assurance practices were used?

D) DISCIPLINE

1. Any discipline problems in class?
2. How is discipline handled? (Strategy?)
3. Is the strategy successful?

E) ANYTHING ELSE?



Appendix G: Focus group questions

**MED RESEARCH INSTRUMENT:
QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA.**

LEARNER FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

School: _____

Date: _____

Interviewees: _____

Interviewer: _____

Was the interview recorded? _____

Has the interview been transcribed? _____

Start the interview with the following:

Today is the DATE I am interviewing NAME OF INTERVIEWEES

They are in GRADE at NAME OF THE SCHOOL

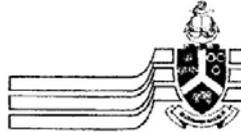
Their teacher is NAME OF TEACHER

QUESTIONS

- How do you get to school in the morning? (Transport)
- How many friends do you have in class? (Different culture, gender and religion)
- Do all the learners get along with each other? (Fights / Incidents)
- What kind of activities do you enjoy doing in class?
- What kind of activities don't you enjoy doing in class?
- After any type of assessment, does your teacher provide feedback on your progress? (If YES, how do they feedback? If NO, how do you know what progress you are making?)
- What do you think is the main role (task) of your teacher?
- How do you think a culturally responsible teacher acts? (What do they do?)
- Would you describe your teacher as a culturally responsible?
(Why?)
- According to you, are you receiving quality education?
(If NO, what can the teacher do better?)
- How does your teacher ensure the quality of your learning?
- What is your average mark for this subject so far?



Appendix H: Ethics clearance certificate: University of Pretoria



UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
 FACULTY OF EDUCATION
 RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

CLEARANCE NUMBER :

SM 09/08/01

DEGREE AND PROJECT

MEd
 Exploring quality and diversity: The role of the teacher in a class of diverse learners

INVESTIGATOR(S)

Wilma Erasmus

DEPARTMENT

Science, Mathematics and Technology Education

DATE CONSIDERED

5 August 2011

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

APPROVED

Please note:

For Masters applications, ethical clearance is valid for 2 years

For PhD applications, ethical clearance is valid for 3 years.

CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS COMMITTEE

Prof L Ebersohn

DATE

24 May 2011

CC

Jeannie Beukes
 Prof S. Vandeyar

This ethical clearance certificate is issued subject to the following conditions:

1. A signed personal declaration of responsibility
2. If the research question changes significantly so as to alter the nature of the study, a new application for ethical clearance must be submitted
3. It remains the students' responsibility to ensure that all the necessary forms for informed consent are kept for future queries.

Please quote the clearance number in all enquiries.



Appendix I: Permission to conduct research: Gauteng Department of Education



UMnyango WezeMfundo
Department of Education

Lefapha la Thuto
Departement van Onderwys

Enquiries: Nomvula Ubisi (011)3550488

Date:	14 May 2008
Name of Researcher:	Erasmus Wilma
Address of Researcher:	Jacobus Street 10
	Kilnerpark Chalets No. 56
	Kilnerpark 0121
Telephone Number:	0126514434/0826110271
Fax Number:	0126515112
Research Topic:	What role does active learning play in assuring quality at schools
Number and type of schools:	1 Secondary Schools
District/s/HO	Tshwane South

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

Permission has been granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met, and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted:

1. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*
2. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.*
3. *A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*

Office of the Chief Director: Information and Knowledge Management
Room 501, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2000 P.O.Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000
Tel: (011) 355-0809 Fax: (011) 355-0734



4. A letter / document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.
5. The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.
6. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.
7. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year.
8. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.
9. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.
10. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
11. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.
12. On completion of the study the researcher must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and one Ring bound copy of the final, approved research report. The researcher would also provide the said manager with an electronic copy of the research abstract/summary and/or annotation.
13. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.
14. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

CHIEF DIRECTOR: INFORMATION & KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

The contents of this letter has been read and understood by the researcher.	
Signature of Researcher:	
Date:	02/06/2008

Appendix J: School Governing Body permission letter



P.O. Box 12067
Queenswood
Pretoria
0121

24 April 2009

The Principal / School Governing Body (SGB)

Name of school

APPLICATION FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH AT NAME OF SCHOOL

I am a student of the University of Pretoria completing a Masters degree in Quality Assurance in Education and Training. To attain the qualification a relevant and factual research project needs to be completed. *Achieving quality and diversity: The role of a teacher in a class of diverse learners* is the proposed title of my dissertation and the purpose of this research project is to investigate how teachers promote/ensure quality education in a class of diverse learners.

I would like to invite your school to participate in the research. The data will be collected during the months of March, April and May 2010 and this would entail interviewing and observing teachers and five learners, each teacher will be observed a number of times. I have already received permission from the Department of Education to conduct the research if your school is willing to participate in the study I need your consent. Please note that no fieldwork will start if I do not have permission from all the relevant parties involved. I will inform the parents in writing about the expected research and ask their consent. I will also inform the learners and get their assent to participate in the research.



All ethical issues have been considered and precautions have been taken to prevent any unfair or unethical practices. An initial interview will be held with the principal at a convenient time, to gather background information concerning the school via a questionnaire. The interviews with the principal, teachers and learners will be recorded and transcribed for reference purposes. All information will be handled strictly confidential. The name of the school and the names of the teachers and learners will not appear in the research report.

Once the research is complete, the school and participants will be informed about the findings and recommendations.

I would appreciate it if you would grant me permission to conduct the research at your school.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely

MS. W ERASMUS (Researcher)

082 611 0371

juffrou007@yahoo.co.uk

DR. S VANDEYAR (Supervisor)

(012) 420 2003

Saloshna.Vandeyar@up.ac.za

DR. V SCHERMAN (Co-Supervisor)

(012) 420 2498

vanessa.scherman@up.ac.za



Appendix K: Parents' permission letter



May 2010

Dear Parent / Guardian

INFORMATION REGARDING RESEARCH BEING CONDUCTED AT YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL

This letter is to advise you about the research that will be conducted at your child's school. The research will form part of my Masters degree in Quality Assurance in Education and Training which looks at how education is facilitated in a class of diverse learners.

I have already received permission from the Department of Education, the Principal and SGB to conduct the research and data will be collected during the month of March, April and May.

Focus group interviews will be conducted with the learners. Your son/daughter might be invited to take part in the research. All information will be handled strictly confidential and your child's name will not be used in the research report. However, the interviews will be recorded and transcribed for reference purposes. Participating in the research is voluntary and your child may withdraw at any time. If you have any concerns or queries about the research, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely

MS. W ERASMUS
RESEARCHER
(012) 651 4434

DR. V SCHERMAN
CO-SUPERVISOR
(012) 420 2498

PROF. S VANDEYAR
SUPERVISOR
(012) 420 2003

X-----

I, _____ parent/guardian of _____ in
Grade _____ at _____ (name of the school) hereby give
permission for him/her to take part in the research being conducted at the school.

Contact number: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date



Appendix L: Learners' permission letter



May 2010

Dear Learner

INVITATION TO TAKE PART IN RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

I would like to invite you, to attend a group discussion, with some of your class mates, to help me collect information for my studies at the University of Pretoria. My study is about what happens in class so that you all are able to learn.

Your principal and parents know about the research, all I need now is for you to accept my invitation. The group discussion will last about 30 minutes and will take place after I have sat in one of your lessons. I will use a voice recorder to record our chat – this is just to help me remember what all of you say. No one will know who you are and what you have said as I will not use your real name in my write-up.

So, what do you say? Do you want to help out? If you do, please fill in the form at the bottom and give it to your teacher.

Thank you!

**MS. W ERASMUS
RESEARCHER
(012) 651 4434**

**DR. V SCHERMAN
CO-SUPERVISOR
(012) 420 2498**

**PROF. S VANDEYAR
SUPERVISOR
(012) 420 2003**

✕ _____

I, _____ (your name) in Grade _____ at
_____ (name of your school) accept the invitation to take part in a
group discussion, with some of my friends.

Your signature

Today's date

Appendix M: Language editor declaration

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF LANGUAGE EDITING

Date: Tuesday, 06 September 2011

This is to certify that Language Editing has been carried out on the following
Master's Dissertation:

*EXPLORING QUALITY AND DIVERSITY: THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER IN A CLASS
OF DIVERSE LEARNERS*

by

Wilma Erasmus

Language Editing was carried out to appropriate academic standards, including
syntax, grammar and style.

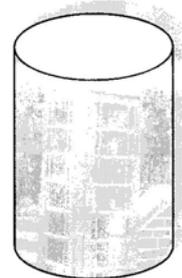


Andrew Graham (BA, MA dist., PhD, University of Keele, UK)*

011 475 6724

073 469 5014

happy4andrew@hotmail.com



*Former Tutor in Postgraduate Writing Centre and Managing Editor of ISI Accredited Journal